



# SNAP SHOTS

With

An Old Maid's Kodaks



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# SNAP SHOTS

WITH AN

## OLD MAID'S KODAK.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Preston Papers,"

"Miss Preston's Leaven,"

"Education in Utopia,"

"The Law and the Pedagogue," etc.

*Summary*

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"A person's laugh will tell more of their character than all their talk will do." Page 29.

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## LOCUS PŒNITENTIÆ,

AND SOME REASONS THEREFOR.

1. That there is any chance for adverse criticism of Schools or Teachers.

2. That it is so much easier to find fault than to find remedy.

3. That critics cannot point to any better system of public schools.

4. That the New Education falls short of perfection.

5. That it would be *very lonesome* if it did not!

6. That dialect, of any kind, finds more readers than pure English.

THE AUTHOR.

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# SNAP SHOTS WITH AN OLD MAID'S KODAK.

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## CHAPTER I.

### AN OLD MAID'S LETTER OF INQUIRY ABOUT THE NEW EDUCATION!

*Here are some practical questions for our teachers, school officers and Boards of Education.*

---

OLDTOWN, N. Y., Dec. 9, 1892.

MISTER EDITOR:

Be you one o' them kind o' men that knows everything an' tells everybody so in the newspaper? If you be, I want to ask a few questions, an' I want straightforward honest answers; foolin' an' sass don't count, even if the Democrats be at the top o' the heap just now. What bothers me is of a sight more importance than politics. Le' me explain.

Durin' the las' month we've been havin' a "County Institoot"—a "toot" of some kind

anyhow; an' as I hadn't nothin' on hand to worry about, nor no gossip to attend to, I jest tho't I'd go in an' see what some o' their new-fangled notions was like; but Land-a-Massy! I never drempt so much talk could be carried on in the name of Education!! It beats me all holler!

"Enjoy it?" Well, *of course* I did, or I wouldn't have gone agin in the afternoon, an' in the evenin', an' agin in the mornin'. But—I couldn't help thinkin' a few tho'ts, as I set on one o' them hind seats, listenin' to language that was very flowery an' sometimes very amusin'. I couldn't always believe I was awake or in the land o' the livin', things was so different from what they was fifty or sixty years ago, when I was a gal!

Somebody, a *real polite* man he was too, handed me a paper askin' me at the same time, with silk in his voice, if I wouldn't like a program! Mercy me, but I was tickled with his manners to a gray headed ole maid (that ain't my fault, le' me tell you) 'n' jest at noon along come a young lady with some papers 'n' books about teachin'; an' she give me one o' them with a smile that went straight to my ole heart (I heard afterward that she was agent for some firm in Lebanon, Ohio, that makes books 'n' papers on purpose for teachers—but I don't care who nor what she



was, long as she's so sweet 'n' pretty-mannered she'll git along!)

But that ain't all. Now I read some, 'n' spell a little, 'n' 'rite too, even if I don't make it go very well; 'n' from them programs 'n' books 'n' papers 'n' speeches I made out that there was lots o' things bein' taught to the young now-a-days that didn't used to be taught.

I'm <sup>a</sup>glad of it, if it's best—but *is* it? *Be* the girls 'n' boys inny better or be they inny happier for their advantages? *Be* they usefuller men 'n' wimmin, lovin'er in their families 'n' kinder to their nayburs? *Be* they more tender hearted? *Be* they better fitted for the duties of life, or be they made unsatisfied 'n' restless? *Be* they better off *mentally*, even, than their fathers 'n' mothers was, that didn't get much outside of the "Three R's" 'n' the New Testament?

Is the New Education, that I heerd talked about so much, goin' to help do away with our paupers 'n' criminals 'n' "Political bosses?" (for I hear that they even teach "Political Economy" an' "Political Arithmetic" now-a-days.)

I know I'm old 'n' fussy 'n' forgetful, 'n' mebbe I'm *sot*—but when I think how many years it takes right out o' one's life, 'n' the best years

too, to go thro' our public schools, 'n' then *see the results*, I wonder does it pay? Is it best? Or be we makin' a grand mistake in crammin' an' fillin' 'n' proddin' the children this way?\*

So I tho't I'd ask the Journalist, knowin' he'd be likely to know—an' fer fear you are too busy to write it all out with your pen you may print your answer in the paper, for ever since the young lady gave me that sample I've meant to buy one every month to read what you say about "The New Education," to

Yours truly,

POLLY POOLE.

P. S.—Pa says I'll have to pay you fer this 'n' fer printin' yer answer, too—fer everything goes by "space" in a newspaper; so here's a dollar to pay fer this, 'n' I'll send you more if you need it.

P. P.

\*See Appendix "A" written by the Author of Snap Shots, in 1882, for a New York paper.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE OLD MAID ENCOUNTERS MORE? ??

*Becomes enthusiastic and proposes an expedition  
a la Dr. Rice of Forum fame.*

---

MISTER EDITOR:

I was so tickled to see my name in print that I don't begrudge the dollar I sent you to print my questions with, not one mite; and by the same token I'm goin' to send you another herein to do some more printin' for me. Le' me tell you what I've found out.

I went down to my brother's office the other day—he keeps a life insurance company—'n' I found him just a goin' it 'bout a mistake of his type-writer's. She's a mighty pretty girl 'n' I always tho't he sot great store by her; but it seem's if she didn't know enough 'bout grammar, 'n' spellin' 'n' punctuatin' to hurt her, if she is a graduate from the High School.

Says I, "Henry," says I, "we can all criticise

each other, but," says I "be you much better off?"—cause I can remember when Henry first come home from college 'n' went down to help Pa in the same office, at the same work, *only* Henry didn't have no type-writin' machine, he had to fetch it all out o' his head 'n' fingers.

Well, he stopped scoldin' the girl, 'n' says he "Polly, that's jest it, our schools 'n' colleges ain't *practical* enough for business men." Says he "A young woman twenty years old, that knows more about Roman History than she does about common every-day affairs, like ours, *can't earn her salary.*"

Says I somewhat coldly, "Henry, is your salary inducement a *very immense* one?"

Says he "Just look at these letters yourself, Polly, 'n' stop chaffing me 'bout what I pay Miss Smith. When she can earn more I can pay more—but it would be better for her 'n' me too if she knew a little more about letter writing, even if it took off some of the time she spent on Grecian Mythology and psychology and several other 'ologies," 'n' he handed me some several letters; an' to say the least they wa'n't nothin' to be proud of. There didn't seem to be no appreciation of the real value of language in innysbody that would write "we *quarantine* our customers

*in unity* from loss," when the dictation was "*guarantee immunity* from loss."

The language was bad all through, 'n' the spellin' 'n' punctuation worse. Even with my old glass eyes I could see that, 'n' I don't entirely blame Henry for bein' out o' patience; but neither do I think Miss Smith is *altogether* responsible.

Is the *value of accuracy* taught in our schools? Isn't *quantity* preferred to quality in the daily work 'n' in the examinations? Ain't some common things given the cold shoulder, in favor o' some things of more hifalutin sound 'n' sight?

To me it looks like girls 'n' boys git a smatterin' o' some things that's no earthly good to 'em here or hereafter; while some things that they'd find useful to know 's long as they earn their daily bread 'n' butter gets a heap o' neglect.

Mebby I'm mistaken in this; but I'll do—say! I haint' got much on hand this winter, 'n' I'm kind o' fired up to see who's to blame; n' if you'll kind o' be moral 'n' financial support for me, I'll just go on a tour of inquiry among our business men and schools first 'n' find out. Mebby between us we can help right up matters if they need righting; 'n' if they don't, if the public schools is all right, we'll just say so in your paper.

Only t'other day I was readin' in a New York Magazine—The Forum—a piece by a man that's doin' this very thing in all the big cities. Dr. Rice I believe he calls himself. An' I really believe a good deal that he says.

Then I read in a Cleveland paper that Supt. Draper found fault with the teachers there because they didn't teach readin' well enough. Jest think of it! Readin' to be neglected in our public schools! What be we a comin' to if these things is true?

What do you say, Mister Editor, shall I go pokin' my big bunnit 'n' ole shawl around into all the schools 'n' business places I can get into, 'n' see what I kin see, 'n' let you know? 'Cause I can't afford to travel much without somebody'll help pay my expenses; but I'll give my time, if you'll git my lunches 'n' fare paid. Is it a bargain? Hopin' that you'll say "yes," I will await your reply to,

Yours Truly,

POLLY POOLE.

[Why, yes—Miss Polly; your ideas are good if their expression is somewhat antiquated; and even that may become somewhat modified by closer contact with people whose language is more carefully chosen. Ideas first, however,

for they are priceless ; and language will follow. Let us hear from you every month, if your investigations develop anything of general interest on either side of the questions that are uppermost in the educational world. We'll "pay the freight."

EDITOR.]

## CHAPTER III.

## THE OLD MAID INVESTIGATES.

*Honesty asked for as part of the curriculum.*

---

MISTER EDITOR :

Well, sir, I've begun my tour, 'n' I promise you that I've learnt some things 'n' can guess at more!

The first man that I seen was awful excited the minute I spoke on the subject. Says he hot an' quick :

"Tell 'em to teach honesty first of all; everything else is of minor importance. If I've got to watch a young man or young woman to see that I'm not cheated as to time, work or fealty, I just get rid o' him as soon's ever I can say 'Start.'"

Well there's a master lot in that thought. "Eye service" all comes from lack of integrity; but just how far our schools is to blame for this lack I didn't see; so I asked Mr. Stuart what



he thought 'n' how he come to put that idee first.

"Well," says he "I'll tell you. I've seen lots of folks go wrong that had no home training when young. All they were ever taught came thro' our school-houses; and as far 's right 'n' wrong are concerned they didn't get much; nothing to brag of. Honesty, pure and simple, not from policy, but from right, is the cornerstone of character; and character-building is the object of education."

Mister Editor, that's a good idee 'n' I pondered over it; 'n' I took my knittin' 'n' went over that very day to visit Miss Sylvester's school 'n' see what I could see. Now Miss Sylvester 's a good teacher 'n' gits along with all kinds o' questions amazin' easy. I've known her ever sence her mother 'n' me used to set on the same bench at school in the little red school house at the forks o' the road, up the Genesee Valley; 'n' I well remember—but I musn't stop for none o' them memories. Just now my duty is to run my knittin' needles round the class room 'n' probe 'em all. We've got too many bank officers languishin' in our prison walls (because they wa'n't honest), an' too many Sunday School Superintendents making excursions to Canada with the church

funds, to leave the question to settle its own future.

Miss Sylvester was awful polite, but she fired up good when I begun to use my probin' needle.

Says she: "Aunt Polly, you've certainly found your mission right among the heathen of our own dooryards. We teach for pay. Pay depends on success. Success is estimated entirely by our 'averages' and our 'per cents.'—not by the good we do morally. That doesn't count. It isn't on our program, and we don't get paid for teaching outside of the print; but if we fall short of that, Heaven help us! We're either dropped entirely as 'incompetent' or else put into the most monotonous part of the entire treadmill, with no hope of ever getting out of it."

I confess there didn't seem much to encourage honesty in that outlook; but I said with as cold a voice as I could command: "Miss Sylvester, have you ever been excused from your responsibilities as a cultivator of the morals of these school children by that Highest Power of all, who gave you the talent to teach?"

"That's just it" she said with deepening earnestness; "we steer from Scylla only to encounter Charybdis. We are asked to fight, and the very first thing done by way of preparation is to ti

our hands. It's a fine 'system' where everything goes by machinery, and everybody rises or falls with clock-like precision, not according to what he *is* but what he can *show*."

I *couldn't* argue again that, 'n' so I set 'n' knit 'n' thought; 'n' I guess she thought some, for there was a bright red spot on each cheek, 'n' she called class after class, heard 'em recite, dismissed 'em an' called more. I was clean beat out to just set 'n' watch her; 'n' it struck me finally that five minutes might be profitably dropped from paper-foldin', 'n' sand-playin', 'n' clay-modelin', 'n' body-twistin', 'n' such things, to tell them children some immortal truths that might make a difference with them for all eternity. But she's got to satisfy the requirements of her principal, so to her Prin. I went.

Says he, "Madam, my teachers are all honest at heart. I don't allow cheating on my reports, nor lying about what they've done."

*Mebbe he don't*—but there's some temptation to do just that thing. And when a teacher ain't entirely free to teach and work *uprightly*, it don't take more'n a week for a child to discover that his teacher is showin' off—nor to go 'n' do thou likewise.

Well the principals is held under in the same

way of the Superintendents; 'n' the Sups. by the Boards of Education, 'n' the Boards by the taxpayers; 'n' they by their love of the almighty dollar. That sir, I believe to be the pivot on which the whole thing turns. Economy is the *desideratum* instead of integrity; 'n' the boys 'n' girls are deprived of their rightful heritage of moral teaching in this way.

Mister Editor—this water is getting pretty deep for me. Can't you foller out my ideas 'n' present the subject fuller 'n' better than I can? I see how necessary this influence must be, 'n' I see how it will alter 'n' affect every point of every business or profession, sooner or later; how it enters not only into the quantity of work everywhere, but into the quality also.

I believe we ought to teach honesty.

What have you to say on the subject, to

Yours truly,

POLLY POOLE.

[Well sister Poole—incidentally, we all ought to teach integrity, honesty; but—how far our schools may reasonably be expected to do this work, as a part of the curriculum, is an open question. Glad your language improves. May we not hear from our active teachers, Principals, Superintendents, Boards of Education and taxpayers, on this question? EDITOR.]

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE OLD MAID PLEADS FOR PUNCTUALITY.

*Some Laughable Incidents Portrayed.*

---

MISTER EDITOR:

I'm afraid I shall hurt some o' the women-folks this time, for it was at our W. C. T. U. meetin' that I took my inspiration for this chapter. An' this is how it come about:

We have an hour once a week from 3 P. M. 'til 4 following. Wall, I'm always minded to be prompt, 'n' I got there just as the big clock rung the chimes for 3—but there was only two members present: ole Miss Peterson, who hadn't oughter be out at all on account 'f rheumatiz, 'n' a young woman what I don't know personally but who is connected with our schools in some peculiar way—a Superintendent, I think they call her, whatever that means. I thought Supts. was always full-grown men.

Bimeby in come two more, sot a spell, got up 'n' went out, as I had a mind to, only I was beginnin' to get my war paint on, an' could afford to suffer in silence 'til I got a chance to speechify to the sisters, on the venal sin of tardiness.

After a time some more come in, 'n' more pretty soon; 'n' at half past three about half the regular attendants was there—but not an officer to preside. I was wrath, very—'n' when Miss Mead come in smilin' (she always smiles—don't know no better I s'pose) 'n' walked up to the chair 's if everything was all right, I could have shook her!

After the Bible was read 'n' the business begun I calmed down a bit an' got ready to spread myself on the subject of punctuality. So when the clock chimed 4 I rose with great dignity 'n' proposed that we adjourn.

"Can't do it," says Miss Mead; "ain't half through yet."

Says I, calmy, says I: "Our hour is from 3 to 4. It's time to adjourn."

"Can't help it" says she; we've got to appoint a committee to draft that petition to the Legislature; to see to arrangements for next week's entertainment and hear the secretary's report of

last week's convention. I hope Sister Poole isn't tired"—'n' she kep' on smilin'.

"Well I be," says I; "I was e'enamost tired out settin' here waiting' over half 'n' hour to have this meetin' open—'n' not a blessed officer here to do it. What right has any one to take the time that belongs to the meetin' 'n' then make the meetin' overrun?" 'n' I sot down and looked around an' seen two more on their feet—among 'em Miss Eddy (our minister's wife) 'n' the young woman before mentioned.

Miss Mead recognized Miss Eddy 'n' the rest give way.

Says Miss Eddy slowly: "I think Sister Poole is right. Our time is one hour; and it's not fair to those who are punctual that they must give double time to them that come late. I believe this habit of beginning late and closing late has much to do in hindering the good results of our work. I know it to be so in our church affairs—and my husband has decided to commence on time if there's nobody present but himself, and to close just as promptly"—'n' she sot down.

That young woman was up 'n' recognized before another woman could stir. Says she:

"My friends are right. We have no right to be behind hand nor to waste other people's time,

even if we do our own. I second Miss Poole's motion to adjourn."

Miss Mead had to put the question, 'n' the motion was carried. She quit smilin' for at least half an instant. As we moved out Miss Preston come up to me 'n' says she :

"Miss Poole you hit the nail on the head. Punctuality is the soul of business ; and if the want of it doesn't ruin the W. C. T. U. the members'll have to turn over a new leaf."

Says I, somewhat coldly : " Do you advocate that in your school work ? "—for if I do find fault in the meetin' rooms I don't believe in talkin' over faults outside.

"Yes ma'am " says she ; " and you would if you had to go from one school-house to another, to give lessons, 'n' find only about half the teachers ready for you at the appointed hour—thus robbing the class of just so much instruction to which they are entitled. And that is the case with three-fourths of our special teacher's work."

Mister Editor, right there I thought a big, big thought ; 'n' instead o' goin' home I walked up Broad street to talk with some o' our business men 'n' see what their opinion is. I went into Mr. Duncan's big store first, 'n' soon's I'd passed the time o' day, says I :



"If you was hirin' a young man or woman what three qualities would you look for first, 'n' in what order?"

Says he: "Polly, do you want a position?" laughin.'

"No," says I, "leave them to the young folks—but I do want to know what you consider the first three essentials of good service."

He took out his tablet 'n' wrote—Integrity, Punctuality, Accuracy.

Mister Editor, I called on fifteen men that afternoon 'n' found almost no variation of sentiment. The next day I visited some o' the schools 'n' I'm obliged to report that some of 'em (I say it with regret) don't know that there is such a thing as accuracy in the whole wide world; 'n' others are afraid of it—least ways I s'pose they are the way they avoid it.

But it ought to be writ on every program an' rung with every bell.

An' I find that the chances of success are much greater everywhere with a prompt man than with a "lazy" one—'n' so with women; even house-keepers are more or less valuable in proportion as they are on time or behind it, waiting for things to ketch up.

Why, this thing affects all walks of life, 'n' I

wonder that our teachers don't make more of it. What do you say Mister Editor? Speak—I'll leave a space for you.

With the best regards of

POLLY POOLE.

[Sister Poole, we think with Mr. Duncan that Punctuality stands right next to Integrity—flanked on the other side by Accuracy; and as you say some of our teachers are alive to the fact, while others—

EDITOR.]

## CHAPTER V.

AND NOW THE OLD MAID INSISTS UPON ACCURACY.

*Finds a Teacher who is utterly unfitted for his work.*

---

MISTER EDITOR :

I be a little afraid that some o' my letters carry too much caloric; but when I think o' the millions o' dollars spent in developin' the brain power o' Young America, 'n' the vitality 'n' strength it requires to go through a graduatin' course, 'n' then *compare the results*, I sometimes wonder if we aint' in danger o' bumpin' up again ole Ben Franklin's caution-post about *payin too dear for the whistle*. Now Ben 'n' me dont always agree, but I'm free to confess that in this one particular he's of my mind to a T.

Considerin' on these things, 'n' thinking these thoughts I took my knittin' 'n' went over to Mr. Brown's school. Now Mr. Brown's a *real nice man*—but he wa'nt never meant to teach *accuracy*

'n' if God or Nature designed him to teach anything else they must ha' forgot some o' the material, for he's awfully lackin' in elementary necessities, so fur's teachin' goes. (I've copyrighted them big words, leastways the way they're strung together—so don't you let none o' them spruce young candidates make any more fun o' my style. The Journalist is payin' the expenses o' this investigation, 'n' is entitled to the use 'o' dictionary words, if they're to be had.)

But, to come back to Mr. Brown. He had a readin' class in front of him when I went in, but, law me! I dont call that *readin'* when they merely mumble and stumble and drawl the words, 'thout sensin' a thing they're sayin'! However, it seems to suit him very well, for he didn't take no notice o' their little inaccuracies (that's *another* good word, 'n' all paid for!) nor their manner nor voice nor nothin'; but when they'd read around two or three times, until there wasn't no more in *that* piece, he said—mild as molasses—“Read the next selection to-morrow.”

Then they wrote—or *scribbled*—in their copy-books, 'n' he sot at his desk 'n' wrote a letter part o' the time 'n' part o' the time he read the mornin' paper.

I begun to get nervous, 'n' says I “Mr. Brown,

can I move about among the desks, 'n' look at the copy books?"

"Why certainly," says he, calm and placid's a June puddle.

Well sir, about *half* 'o' them boys 'n' girls didn't pay no attention to *spellin'* their copies right; 'n' as for crossin' their *t's* or dottin' their *i's* why it never seemed to occur to them to do that!

Says I to George Harris, says I "George, you ain't makin' very good headway with your writin' be you?"

He blushed a little, 'n' says he "It won't make no difference! I'll git a 10 on my card all the same. Mr. Brown never looks at our writing books. He says: 'Write on page 6 to-day,' 'n' we write there, or somers else; but he never looks."

Says I, coldly: "George, is Mr. Brown goin' to make mince pies o' these books bime by?"

"Why *no*, mam," laughin'.

Says I solemnly: "Is he expectin' to wear 'em for boots?"

"Hardly, I guess."

"Nor to use em for railroad fare, nor to pay house rent with?"

"Not as anybody knows of."

"George" says I, "this is *your* education—or a

part of it; *not* Mr. Brown's. *You're* the one that'll use this work 'n' its proceeds, 'n' you're the one who'll gain or lose by the way you do it."

"Thank you, Miss Poole. Honestly I never thought o' that before. I will do better."

Now crossin' an *i* or dottin' a *t ain't much*—but its indicative. (There's another dictionary word; put where it'll do the most good!) And when a boy or girl gets a careless habit o' speech or work, it'll grow faster 'n' they do—unless *somethin'* is done to stunt it. School *seems* like a good place to stunt such things, but somehow they seem to thrive in some mysterious way, so that as a matter of fact most large establishments keep one set of clerks to look over the work of another set. Think of that!

Now this affects *prices*. Accuracy has a commercial value. (Copyrighted also.) For instance, here's Mr. Anderson, a publisher. He does his own printing—by proxy—paying so much an em. Printers average to be as accurate in their work as anyone; but they all depend upon the proof reader for corrections; the proof readers lean upon revisers, and the revisers upon the critic.

The *critic commands a salary*—and it is a good one; now take away the *necessity* for the critic's

work, and distribute that salary among the revisers; don't they gain by accuracy? Do away with a need of revisers and divide up all that money among the proof readers; dismiss *them* and add their wages with the accumulations above named, to the price per em for the printers, *provided* the printers' work shall be so nearly accurate as to be dependable! Can you see the "commercial value" of accuracy?

Here is Mr. Lovell, whose business is done largely by correspondence. He has many departments, with numerous clerks in each, and each department has to have a "complaint" clerk—one who looks up and traces the errors of book-keepers, shipping clerks, entry clerks, stenographers, mailing clerks, etc. Think of the time and money that might be saved to that establishment and its employees if accuracy had been taught and enforced and drilled upon in every lesson while those young men and women were in school!

But that isn't the worst of it! As they go out into other lines of business as drug clerks, physicians, nurses, telegraph operators, railroad men, human lives are sacrificed to their habitual carelessness!

Isn't it time to call a halt? *Shall* the "Six

Hundred" be forced into the "valley of death because "some one has blundered" and no one raise a dissenting voice to this wholesale slaughter?

I tell you, Nay! There is a responsibility upon the poorest teacher in the land, to teach, preach, practice and drill, *drill*, DRILL, DRILL upon this theme. Hoping that it may be done, I remain,

Very reluctantly,

POLLY POOLE.

[This point is well taken. Let us hear from our teachers on the question.

EDITOR.]



## CHAPTER VI.

## THE OTHER SIDE.

*Some Advantages of our Public School System  
named by Miss Preston.*

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May 1, 1893.

MISTER EDITOR :

Certainly there always is two sides to every question ; 'n' havin' found so many prominent faults with our schools I b'lieve it's only fair to show the other side—for there certainly is some good points.

I was thinkin' these thoughts when I was in to see Miss Preston the other day. (She's our Superintendent now—used to be one of our teachers.)\* So I asked her, says I :

“Miss Preston, do you believe in our public school system?”

\*See “*Preston Papers*” by the Preston Publishing Company, 37 West 10th St., New York City.

"*Certainly* I do," come with great promptness.

"With your hull soul?"

"Yes and no."

"Why 'Yes' and why 'No'?"

"Miss Polly," says she, "you've been for months showing up the reasons why none of us can believe in it entire; but while you have good cause for all you've said and written I have sometimes wished you would be fair enough to point out some things besides its defects."

My feelin's begun to bile, but I threw a chunk of ice onto the fire 'n' it sizzled a bit 'n' then went square out, for I seen to once that it's a plaguey sight easier to find fault than to find perfection—even in spots; 'n' I know, too, that the world is full o' old fogies (yes, just like me! I know well enough what you want to say!!) who live only in the past 'n' who think that the "good ole times" is the only times worth mentionin' 'n' who think because they 'n' their fathers 'n' gran' fathers went to mill with corn in one end o' the bag 'n' a stone in t'other to balance it, that there ain't no better way o' goin' to mill; but *I know there is*; 'n' I also b'lieve that the New Education must have *some* elements o' strength in it.

So says I, as calm an' clammy as my stone door step, says I:

"Miss Preston, it galls me just awful to say it—but I ain't so young as I once was, nor so good lookin' as you be (*My*, but that tickled her !) but I can see through a knot hole yet—'n' I want you to give me the very best p'int's you can on this question. I'll git 'em printed by the Journalist same's I did my own."

"Good !" says she, 'n' she laughed. Now I like Miss Preston's laugh. It's real warm 'n' hearty, without even the shadder of a sneer in it—which is more than can be said of some people's laugh. Honor bright I think a person's laugh will tell more of their real character than all their talk will do. It sometimes pays to study human nature by its side-lights.

She had her things on just ready to go out when I went into her office, but now she sot down, took off her gloves, closed her eyes half way 'n' said, 's if she's dreamin':

"Miss Polly, if our public school system did nothing but pull down the barrier of *caste*, it would have accomplished enough to entitle it to everybody's respect. Here the rich and the poor meet as equals. Gold won't buy brains, nor per cents nor averages. Money is not the test by which the grading is done and the examinations made ; and the boy who might otherwise depend

upon the influence of a long purse, to give him status, here learns that it requires an application of brain power to give success, and that he may be outranked by the son of a beggar or mechanic unless he applies himself to his work."

"That is good" says I ; "Next."

"Well," says she slowly, "it does that for the rich man's son—gives him a healthy respect for labor. For the poor man's son it has brought him in contact with the refinement, courtesy and manners to which by accident of birth he was denied, but which by association become his and which tell upon his entire future."

"I see," says I ; "go on."

"It helps us as a nation also.

"How ?"

"By giving us good citizen-qualities in those who have been taught obedience to law in our public schools. Submission to discipline, even though only of the school-room, obedience to the wish of the majority and to the control of those in power, are elemental requisites in good citizens, diminishing strikes, mobs and anarchy, replacing these with respect for law, order and other people's rights."

Really, *that* seemed worth listening to, 'n' I begged her not to stop.

"I wish you could see, as I have seen, the benefits arising from regularity in daily habits" she continued; "Our public schools teach this, indirectly perhaps; but it has its influence in making orderly men and women.

"Then, too, the schools are an inspiration to higher, nobler living among the school children. In this sense the teacher becomes a real missionary, opening new worlds of thought to eyes and minds on which Ignorance and Vice had laid heavy hands—for in the teacher the child of Crime and Degradation sees a being of a higher order; and the awakening and saving of the soul here is fully as important as is that in distant Boorio-Boola-Gha."

This was an elevation of the "system" of which I hadn't dreamt—actually on a par with our Mission Board!

"Miss Poole, you cannot judge of the place and importance our public schools hold in the lives of the children in the wards of our large cities, where the population is largely foreign, because you live just here, and have always lived here. Your judgment is formed entirely by what you have seen and heard—and to do justice to your subject you should see other schools, under other circumstances.

“Where shall the offspring of old country peasants learn patriotism and fidelity to the new home? Not around the immigrant’s hearthstone, for his heart ever turns to his mother country ; not in the churches nor Sunday schools of the land, for even if they devoted their entire time on Sunday to the work, it would be only a part of one day in seven in which they could sow the seeds that must eventually bear fruit for America. The school room must be the place where Norwegian, Swiss, Russian, German, French, Italian, Chinese, English, Irish, Pole, must be Americanized, must be fitted for a higher plane of life and living.”

Mister Editor, them are pretty big ideas, 'n' put out in big words—but if you find innny trouble gittin' at their size, just call on

Yours Truly,

POLLY POOLE.

[They *are* “big ideas,” but the theme is large ; and as Miss Preston says, justice can never be done when only one side of a question is discussed. What is true of city schools is seldom true of those in the rural districts—and vice versa ; and what is common to either in one section of the country may be entirely unknown elsewhere. Let everybody who wishes come

into this discussion. Then we shall see it from every point of view. Come one, come all.

EDITOR.]

## CHAPTER VII.

## OBEDIENCE.

*The Old Maid Discovers Obedience and Recognizes it as One of the Cardinal Virtues.*

---

May 4, 1883.

MY DEAR MISTER EDITOR :

I feel humble. Very. "Why?" Because, sir, I have found the corner stone of character taught directly and indirectly by this same public school system that I've been a tearin' and a scoldin' about, 'n' that corner stone is *obedience*. You may write it in letters of light or on tablets of gold, for it is worthy; an' anything that promotes obedience, that enforces it, that makes it a second nature to the child, is entitled to be held in respect an' esteem—*no matter if 'taint quite perfick*. By the way what *is* perfick on this earth? Can you name one thing where you can't suggest an improvement?

Well, now, it's on this wise : I went into one



o' the public schools the day after I writ last, 'n' I got a talkin'—(No it *ain't* "anything unusual," but you needn't be so keen after my lapses. A woman that can't talk ain't more'n half human!) Well, as I was sayin' I got a talkin' with Miss Preston, 'n' she just combed my hair (so to speak) for what I've left unsaid—more than for what I've said. Says she :

"Miss Poole, I believe you're sincere in your wish to help."

"I be," says I ; "for though I wasn't born to much education, an' didn't acquire no great amount, nor git much thrust upon me—as somebody says about 'greatness' in one of Mr. Shakspeare's plays—I believe in it, 'n' in big doses, but without quite so much cream 'n' sugar with the dose."

"Why *not* cream 'n' sugar?" says she, in an awful mild voice but with ten pounds o' pressure on that "not."

"Why, because" says I,—'n' if you'll believe me, Mister Editor, every blessed idea I *had* left me there, with only a blank stare in my face 'n' not one word in my throat. Course I *meant* to argy agin so much 'spoon vittles' style, givin' intellectual (?) soup where solid meat was needed for real growth 'n' stren'th; but somehow she

actually looked them words 'n' phrases right down my throat so fur they just dassent come up, for fear of gittin' smashed when they fell out. Ever had inny body freeze your speakin' tubes that way?

"I have never found," says she, "that the making a duty disagreeable added to its force. If I had to split wood I'd rather do it out of doors, in a big sunshiny yard, instead of in a dark little room, where I could n't half see, and was likely to spend unnecessary time and strength on work that might be done more easily and quickly."

"There's common sense in that idee, any way," thinks I, "'n' I'll see what more she has to say." So I began to be crafty like, 'n' asked her some questions—which I'll give you in substance, 'n' her answers, for I b'lieve they're worth printin'.

"I got an idee," says I, "that some o' our schools put in more play than work."

"It may be true in isolated cases, though I don't think it is in general. On the contrary I should say we are teaching more subjects and getting greater and better results than we did thirty years ago."

I reflected. That sounded good, if it's true, for we must depend upon results to judge by.

"What be some o' these results?" says I.

"Obedience, is one," she begun.

"Stop right there!" says I; "if you kin prove that alone, it's enough to mantle a multitude of faults."

"I believe you," says Miss Preston; "now kindly revert to the schools of your day. How were they governed?"

*Oh*, my land! How *was* they governed? If she *only* had n't asked that! But I braced up and prepared to take my medicine without making faces because 'twan't sugar-coated. So I said somewhat firmly:

"Accordin' to my best recollection we had a strap in our school, with the alphabet at one end and the teacher at the other."

"Your picture is graphic, but I believe it is not overdrawn. It was a common experience. How about 'turning the teacher out'?"

Now *that* was another tender spot—for we used to look for a "tussle" at the opening of every winter's work, in the balmy days of long ago, to which we old fogies turn with such insistence (I borrowed that word from Miss Preston. I *do* hope it ain't misplaced!)—an' as a usual thing our teachers was hired with as much regard to weight an' "stuff" as to certificate.

"It was part o' the play, at times," says I frankly. (I jest *have* to be frank with her. Ever have an affection o' that kind?)

"Our children don't do that," says she. "They accept the teacher as a friend and as a superior, entitled to obedience and respect, *as of right*. Generally speaking our teachers command the pupils' *love* also."

Have you ever noticed that love is likely to follow obedience? Now mebbe I'm mistook in this; but I do believe that love rests upon respect, an' obedience inspires that—so I could see at once just what Miss Preston was comin' to.

"Brute force has not the power it was once supposed to have," she went on; "and the teaching that is clubbed in is not likely to be so durable as that which is taken in to quench a thirst for knowledge. The laws of love and obedience are begun in the kindergarten, and become a matter of course while the child is yet in the plastic condition of his early years. *Habit of thought* is a serious matter in character building, Miss Poole; and our system aims at just that. Imperfect though it may be, it is far the best of which I know—and *I believe it improves every year!*"

Come to think it over I believe she's right! If

our foreign element came here with the law of obedience engraved upon their hearts, an' "fixed" as the habit of their minds, as thoroughly as it is imprinted upon our school children an' youth, what would the next generation see? I had n't time for another blessed thought, for Miss Preston went on, in lighter vein:

"Suppose you go with me into Miss Phillips's school some day, Miss Poole, just to see the law of obedience exemplified. Shut your eyes to everything else, please; there may be things to criticise; but I want to call your attention to this one fact, which I consider of grave import. You will see children who not only *obey* (promptly and cheerfully, without question of authority or argument against it) not only the spoken command, suggestion or direction, but also the 'silent signals' of the program, the clock face, the black board. You will see them turn in their seats at a given time, rise with more or less uniformity of motion, and advance (quietly so as not to disturb those who are at work) to the recitation room at the end of the study room, *without a word having been spoken* to remind them of time, duty or place. The 'atmosphere' is that of obedience, and it creates a sense of personal responsibility which is not bad to have in the family, to say the least."

Well, Mister Editor, *I went*; and I saw just those things; and I thought that those children will be dependable as they grow up. There can't be no great danger of boys an' girls going astray who have been taught *to do as they are told*, by those having authority.

Surely, parents sometimes forget this, an' allow this primal lesson to go all unlearned, until it is learned at school—for Miss Preston says that she finds many children comin' into school from homes where the discipline is "slack" but "who fall into line very easily when the condition is accepted as a matter of course; an' at the end of the school life such children are returned to parental authority with much in their characters to recommend them as law-abiding citizens of the future, which they could not have had but for the influence of the public-school system, where children obey laws an' teacher,—teachers respond to the requirements of principals, principals yield obedience to the superintendents, who in turn receive orders from the Board of Education and the law-makers."

May we not pause an' take breath on the question of the benefits derived from the lessons of O B E D I E N C E which are taught in our public schools?

Feeling sure that you will say "Yea and Amen!"

I remain,

Very Truly,

POLLY POOLE.

[Yes, the Editor can subscribe to all the above and more; for he has known children whose knowledge of other important things was first gained in the school room; and they are not isolated cases, either. In many instances, too ——— but I must not anticipate your revelations, Miss Poole.

EDITOR.]

## CHAPTER VIII.

## MANUAL TRAINING.

*Respect for Labor, Found as Another Beneficent  
Result of Part of the Much Criticised System.*

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June 1, 1893.

MISTER EDITOR :

I've been over to Pratt Institute,\* 'n' if you've never been there you jest oughter go. Why I hain't in no condition to set here 'n' write calmly 'bout what I seen—I want to git right up 'n' shout “Praise the Lord!”

Why *didn't* nobody never tell me that children was taught to *work* now-a-days, as well as to read 'n' write 'n' cipher !

Why, bless my stars ! The girls 'n' boys of our day 'n' generation can *go to school* to learn their trade!

Think o' that, 'n' compare 1893 with 1833, when if there was a trade to be learned there was a

\*Brooklyn, N. Y.



'prentice's life o' luxury before the boy, with sometimes not the most desirable associations all through !

Then, too, *the instruction goes right on*, an' when a girl is learnin' to make her own bonnets, she's learnin' all about "complementary colors," artistic forms, etc; and when makin' cloth up into dresses 'n' other clothes she's told about the material, its parts, its process of manufacture, desirable qualities, average cost, quantity required, how to select good fabrics, and dozens o' things that most of us back-century folks have had to study out by experience.

Just so in the cooking departments, and the laundry, and the other parts of the girls' departments wherever manual training is a part of school work. The boys learn tailoring, carpentry, printing, and other useful things, and *I believe I begin to see some sense in clay modelin'* 'n' other things that I jest laughed at or scorned when I first seen 'em!

I asked Miss Preston how long this had been goin' on, 'n' if it had took root anywhere except in our part o' the country.

"Oh, yes," says she, "Superintendent Waller of Pennsylvania said in his last report that manual training had taken a firm hold upon the peo-

ple there; and Minnesota is one of the most enthusiastic sections, some idea of which may be gained from the fact that the boys of Minneapolis recently made and presented a silver hooped gavel to the Republican Convention; if a desk or chair breaks down they repair it; and they not only repair and manufacture, but they design, and if any boy shows special talent in any one branch he is encouraged to devote himself to that and perfect himself in it. In Chicago Philip Armour has given a magnificent building and grounds with a million and a half dollars for a manual labor training school. Chattanooga was the first southern city to establish a manual training school, I believe; but other states have followed Tennessee very closely—the Superintendent of Mississippi throwing his scholarship and enthusiasm into the general school work to a degree that might well be imitated in some of our northern officers. Both that state and Georgia have industrial colleges, the benefits of which are far too great for us to comprehend, unless we have known the condition in which the last generation was left.”

I was interested in this panorama an' asked about the East an' West.

Miss Preston laughed, softly though, an' said:

"You'll be surprised to learn that the 'Hub is' at all behind in anything pertaining to intellectual development, but manual training is certainly 'from brain to hand' and as a fact the lead has not been given here. I cannot quite understand why—but some of the states in the far West are way ahead of New England in this."

"Where did this thing begin? Whew! Who thought it out?"

"I believe Richard Auchmutz of New York was the first to see the hopeless inadequacy of the apprenticeship system to the modern conditions of society and labor, and to replace it by a well arranged and thorough course of study and education in the 'mechanic arts,' as they are called. He has carried on his work for a dozen years, and to-day the trades in New York are at least in part supplied by men who illustrate by their skill and proficiency the success of his effort and the value of the trade schools in that city."

Mister Editor, some o' them are pretty big words—but I sensed 'em all right. Miss Preston speaks real easy an' so I kin understand even when she uses real dictionary words. But I jest about think some o' these pints are good things for our taxpayers (especially them that growl) to consider, when they're findin' fault with the

public schools 'n' what's bein' taught in 'em. I'm free to confess that *I've been stumped* to find that some o' the "fads" have a useful side, even when considered from a bread-winner's standpoint!

Says I, "Miss Preston, what's the end of all this?"

"Who can tell?" she give me back. "Two things I am sure it will affect—has affected already, though in a slight degree compared with the future. These are the questions of labor and marriage. Foreign immigration of skilled labor during the last two or three decades has been so great that the demand for apprentices was greatly diminished; and the formation of labor unions, sometimes governed by foreign-born artisans, has blocked the way against American boys who desired to learn a trade—as the unions have frequently undertaken to regulate apprenticeships to suit their own interests; and these obstructions have had a tendency to send our young men into clerkships and the professions."

(Now I leave it to you, Mister Editor, to let our voters know about this; for just 's like 's not some o' them never think o' this side o' the question when sendin' men to the Legislature to make laws for our schools and regulate the tax

per cents. But *I did not interrupt* Miss Preston.)

“By opening the avenues of other work for our girls, such as designing, illustrating, modeling, engraving, etc., all of which are taught in some of the industrial classes, these schools have made it possible for a girl to support herself comfortably even if she *hates* sewing or housework or teaching; and as a result she is in no haste to marry the first man that offers himself, fearful lest she never have another chance.”

Now right here, Mister Editor, I'm a little bit sensitive, never havin' accomplished a very daz-  
zlin' success in the marryin' line myself, though such has been my intention; so I said, a bit stiffly, it may be.

“Really, I ain't no prophet; but I can't see that a race o' ole maids is any great help to our kentry!”

“No, it may be not,” says she, with some show o' fire in her eyes; “*nor* are inefficient wives and tyrannical husbands. Manual training is in part removing the inefficiency of the one and the hateful domineering of the other. Men must now plead for what was once thrown at them, by custom and education. Marriage thus comes later, but is happier. Common sense enters into the ‘sweet illusive dream,’ and there will be hap-

pier homes, fewer divorce cases, and more intelligent rearing of children. The kindergarten and the manual school are working untold benefits upon the coming generations."

Well, Mr. Editor, I've thought some big thoughts to-day, 'n' if manual trainin' is goin' to have this effect on the girls an' boys, makin' the one more sensible, the other better fit morally, as well as mentally an' physically, for parentage, how fur *will* its blessin's go? Where is the end?

Again: Miss Preston says that it is also doin' much to break down the "caste" lines between wealth 'n' poverty.

"The rich man's son stands at the same bench and uses the same tools as that of the laborer, perhaps admiring the superior dexterity of the latter. The millionaire's daughter vies with her washerwoman's child in the production of a beautiful, well made dress or jacket, a nutritious loaf of bread, or a new or unique design for carpet or wall paper. The one forgets to be supercilious, the other forswears envy, but each sees and recognizes what is best in each. They learn the lessons of patience and forbearance with the faults which have been cherished and fostered by the varying conditions of environment, and become friends. Humility and love take the place of

discord, and they love each other who through false views of the value of wealth and the degradation of manual labor would have been at swords' points as mistress and maid or employer and employee in any capacity. Labor is dignified and the wage worker honored as a producer; while capital is looked upon as a means of purchasing comfort and bestowing blessings, rather than as entitling its possessor to the honor which is due only to character."

There now! if *anyone* has anything to say against manual training let him come to the front or "forever after hold your peace"!

I'm better, thank you, for this view—and content (?) to remain,

POLLY POOLE.

[These are, really, but a few of the many good points this subject presents; but as Miss Poole seems to be on the right track it may be best to let her "gang her own gait."

EDITOR.]

## CHAPTER IX.

## OTHER LASTING BENEFITS.

*Order and Neatness Believed To Be Among the Lasting Benefits of Our School Work.*

July 2, 1893.

MY DEAR EDITOR:

Last week I went out for the last time this year among our city schools to see what I could find that is good and commendable, having made up my mind—what little I have left, I mean—that it's enough sight easier to find fault with what *is* than to offer or find anything better.

This time I went into Mr. Robinson's department. Now Mr. Robinson is a man for whom I never entertained no great regard, to say the least. He's always seemed sort o' namby-pamby, for a man, 'n' no great shakes anyhow.

Well, I've changed my mind agin! . You needn't laugh 's if there was innny patent on my mind, to prevent my changin' it 'f I see good reason, as I certainly do now!

Why, sir, that man oughter be jest crowned



with immortality, here 'n' now! He ain't no more the same person in school, among his "children" as he calls 'em, that he is in his boardin' house than chalk's like cheese! But lem' me explain:

He was talkin' to the children 'bout bein' orderly 'n' neat when I went in, askin' 'em questions 'n' sich like to kinder draw 'em out. He stopped long enough to welcome me most heartily, then went right on same 's if I wasn't there; 'n' sir you jest oughter see them little fellers set there 'n' listen, their eyes a shinin' 'n' they jest drinkin' in every word he said 'n' anxious to tell what they knew, too.

Says he: "Now give me one reason why we ought to be orderly."

One little boy says "It saves time."

"Yes," says Mr Robinson, "and life is too short to let it be wasted. Jessie, in what way does it save time?"

The little girl he looked at said, after a minute's waitin': "Why, you *know* where things are 'n' you don't have to look for 'em!"

"Good," says he; "now think of that when you arrange your books 'n' pencils in your desk. Have a place for each one, and put each back where it belongs whenever you have used it. Do this with your things at home, too, your books,

toys, clothing, or whatever you use. Fred, can you think of any other reason?"

Fred looked a little bit serious, but replied at once : " Things last longer if they're took care of."

" *Taken* care of, Fred, sounds better because correct. Your reason is a good one. But there's one that's better than all these. I wonder who of you can give it. Julia !"

Julia said : " I think you mean because it saves work for some one else, and that we ought to do this."

" That is just it," said Mr. Robinson ; " we must not get in the habit of letting some one else do for us what we can do for ourselves. We must be self-helpful, and try all we can to help others. We will not be doing right by our mothers and sisters if we allow them to pick up after us. We should be looking out to make things easy for them, instead of letting them wait on us. Now about the other division of our subject—neatness. We will first see how it applies to us. If we don't keep our teeth clean, what happens?"

" They decay."

" And then what?"

" Get new ones."

" Can't eat!"

" We get sick."

“Yes; all these things happen in time; and so, too, with other parts of our body. We should be careful, not only on our own account and for our own pleasure, to see that our hair is well brushed, nails kept clean, etc., but also because no one else likes to see these things neglected. Clothing that is kept free from dust lasts longer and looks better. Shoes that are well polished do not wet through as easily. So we are really more comfortable, kinder, and more economical, if we have neat, orderly habits than if careless in our every day work and play. Who will make a beginning to do something *extra* in this line, something not before thought of?”

Nearly every hand flew up, and when Mr. Robinson allowed those who could think of quotations, proverbs, etc., bearing upon either point, to go to the blackboard and write it out you could see that the work was done with an ambition to excel in each.

Such are some of the seeds sown in our public schools, by faithful teachers who *must* realize the difference between the home where all is “at sixes and sevens” and the one where “Heaven’s first law” is commonly practiced.

Shall these things be despised in weighing our public schools in the balance? Do we need to

be told that the orderly going in and out of the building and to and from classes, the regularity of hour for opening and closing school, the succession of work and play, study and recitation, serves to fix *order* as a habit?

I'm going out in the country next month, 'n' I hope I shall get into some of the little school houses that sit by the roadside. Have they advanced, along with the others, and at such a rate? Hoping to find it even so, I will close for this time, remaining

Yours Truly.

POLLY POOLE.

[Miss Poole, all these things deserve the marked attention they are receiving at your hands. Go on in your "defense" for

THE EDITOR.]

## CHAPTER X.

## MORE GOOD WORK.

*The Old Maid Finds Patriotism and Loyalty  
Taught and Encouraged in Our Public Schools.*

August 1, 1893.

MY DEAR MR. EDITOR:

Blessed be every roadside school house, with its flag-pole outside, and warm lovin' hearts inside, the future defenders o' our beautiful Country, if so be she ever needs defendin' agin'!

Why, I've jest been into one o' them little white buildin's, and last month I visited several or more, 'n' they all and every one were teachin' the old time principles, "Taxation without representation is tyranny." (How *does* that affect woman? *Shouldn't* it be changed to read: "Taxation of men"?) "Millions for defense but not one cent for tribute." "All men are created free and equal," and others of similar import—as I heerd a young man express it.

Lem'me tell you about *one*, just one, school near the lake. "What lake?" Why *Lake Ontario!*

*That* belongs to New York don't it? It used to when I studied Geography. Then it was just a black spot on the map—but it really is one o' the most beautiful sheets o' water I know of, and as changeful as a pretty woman's face, one minute all smiles 'an' dimples an' curves, then serious; mebbly in a few minutes cloudy 'n' angry, an' like's not before you git away from her all sadness, sobs, tears an' pathos. Playful as a child by times, an' frequently strong an' wild as a beast.

Oh, Lake Ontario is worthy the poet's pen, the artist's brush. *I love it* 'an' kin set for hours on itssandy beaches, watchin' the waves come an' go an' return agin, every time takin' somethin' from the shore, every time bringin' somethin' back to leave there. Waves of every hue an' color in sunlight, an' by sunset jest like a lot o' jewels all sparklin'. *Have* you ever seen it, Mr. Editor, 'n' watched its moods 'n' tenses? *It is almost human*; and it *can* talk, as few "humans" can!

But where was I? Oh, at the school house! Well, I set outside a while, drinkin' in the golden sunshine, the smell o' clover blooms 'n' the peace 'n' quiet that is only found in the country or on the sea, 'n' listenin' to the hum-drum recitations goin' on within until I heard:

“If we can get through our classes in time to-day, we will have a little talk about the 4th o’ July—why we celebrate, what led up to its honor, when, where, by whom, and all that we can think of.”

I thought it was a good time for me to stay in the background. I knew, by the way that teacher talked, that she was young—therefore likely to be embarrassed if I went in as a “visitor” ’n’ I wanted to see jest what she’d git out o’ her subject!

“How did I know she was young?”

Well, Mr. Editor, you’re not to blame, I s’pose, for what you don’t seem to know; but if *I* was a man I believe I could tell a young woman’s voice from an old one’s, even if I did not see the woman! An’ another thing—there ain’t many teachers that have been in the business a great many years who have enough spirit ’n’ enthusiasm left for extra lessons, glad ’n’ thankful if they hold out for reg’lar work, ’thout takin’ on things that ain’t laid down for ’em in the study books!

Yes, I know *you told me so*—’an a few months ago I was as ready as you are to lay all the blame on the teachers; but *I know better now!* I know that even the worst or most thoughtless of ’em all do their work with as much conscience an’ skill an’ preparation as people in any other

business, 'n' with a plaguey sight less inducement !

Why, Mister Editor, there ain't no use talkin' but when a man or woman can't make more than a "hand to mouth" livin' at any work they hain't got much encouragement to stick to it, 'n' make it grow 'n' blossom 'n' bring forth beautiful fruit ! There's a general sort 'o "Move on, Little Joe" about the hull educational mill that's discouragin' to people that *do* know enough to do somethin' else. Why—but that don't come in this chapter, though I believe in my soul *it oughter come in every chapter!*

Well, I got around to where I could hear the "spread eagle" talk 'n' I tell you I jest enjoyed every bit of it ! I'll give you a taste—for you v'e been pretty good about sendin' me papers 'n' books since I sent you my dollar ! I'll put it 's I heard it, not always knowin' whether the answers was boys or girls or young or old—foreign descent or American, except where there was a brogue :

T. "We will first sing *America*"—which they done fairly well. Then some one asked if they couldn't sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" 'n' "Columbia, the Gem o' the Ocean."

The teacher said "yes" to the first, but drew the line on the other, sayin', with a laugh: "I guess we'd better let *Columbia* rest till to-morrow, if we talk any about the 4th of July!" so they



dropped that 'n' sung the other as only Young America *can* sing when Young America's lungs is strong an' his heart O. K.

"Now," says the teacher, "we'll begin with the flag. How many stars has it? Why? Stripes? Why? What are the colors? What do they signify?"

You'd 'a' been surprised, Mister Editor, to hear them answers! Why the boys 'n' girls eight years old, of to-day, know more about the early history of our country than they used to at fourteen or fifteen when I went to school! Teachin' *has* improved—'n' it will more yet, if teachers can be paid enough to give back to 'em what they v'e spent gittin' ready for their work, provide a comfortable livin' for 'em now an' let 'em lay up a little agin a rainy day. *But* this letter is all about patriotism, though my opinion is that *patriotism*, as well as other things, can be taught with a good deal more vim if the teacher knows she ain't goin' to be left to starve in her old age—or marry to avoid it! However—

T. "By what general name do we call the 4th of July? Why 'Independence Day'? How many signers were there? Why had this action become necessary? What had been done previously in this line?

How long did the war last? What was it called?

"Name and tell what you can about some of the leading battles. Leaders on both sides.

"What were some of the causes that led to the war? Who was on the throne of England? France? How did France show her friendship for us?

"In what way is our government different from that of England? Better? Why?

What do you know about the paper called the 'Declaration of Independence'? How many of you have ever read it? Would you have dared sign it if asked at that time? *Would you have done it?* How many of you will read it with me after school to-morrow? Good? We will take up each paragraph and talk about it. *I dont understand it all myself*, but would like to."

(The honest simplicity of that confession ought to win any child's love.)

There was more of this familiar talk, 'n' I wish there was space for the answers. Some of them were strikingly original—and all showed a taste for more. To wind up with, the teacher "brought home the application" and, for the time being, at least, every child was a patriot hero—longin' to do something to show his love for his country.

Then *the teacher's work really begun*, and she

done it bravely, showin' how peaceful, law-abidin', honest citizens is just as necessary to the country as soldiers; that dishonest men are disgraceful, and that treachery in small things may lead to traitorous deeds; that idleness is shameful in a country where there is so much land to cultivate, so many mines to be dug into, so much to be done in every line of work; that if Arnold had been honest and industrious he might not have been tempted to betray his country; that integrity don't grow in a minute, but has to be cultivated a little at a time, etc.

Well, Mister Editor it done my old soul good to jest set 'n' listen, but I couldn't stand it no longer, 'n' I got up 'n' went into the school room, 'n' I stayed until I'd seen a "flag-drill" 'n' then I had a talk with them all, 'n' *I like our country schools!*

More to follow.

Yours Truly,

POLLY POOLE.

[That teacher is certainly doing a noble work. It is to be hoped that the civil service reform will reach teachers of this class and not only seek to retain them, but *make it worth while for them to stay!*

EDITOR.]

## CHAPTER XI.

## COUNTRY SCHOOL STUDIES.

*Nature Studied by the Country Schools to Miss Polly's Delight.*

September 1, 1893.

WELL MISTER EDITOR:

I've been in the country all summer; in Western New York, in Ohio, in New Jersey, Vermont, 'n' Maine——, 'n' I've been goin' to school 'most all the time!

Why, I don't wonder that boys 'd ruther go than saw wood; nor that girls 'd ruther spend their time at their books than cleanin' kitchen-floors, 'n' sich like. *Think* o' the difference between the schools o' the last generation 'n' them o' to-day—as Miss Preston says; tho' if it hadn't been for her I might ha' gone on findin' fault 'n' nothin' else, to the end o' the chapter.

*To be sure* other people do! 'N' some of 'em have reason to I don't doubt—but let's have fair play, 'n' not make the schools bear the brunt o' what belongs away back among parents,

tax-payers, legislators, 'n' public men generally!

What's pleased me most o' anything is to see the children learnin' to *think for themselves*, to observe an' study an' *know* whether what their books 'n' teachers says is true *is* true or not.

I found plenty o' classes studyin' a book\* that told about food and drink in such a way that they could all understand it 'n' be able to know what was best to eat 'n' what to let alone; how farmin' is carried on in different parts o' the world; what tools are used; how to get seeds from the government; butter an' bread making; chicken-raising; (even the incubator is mentioned), fruits are described; an' many more things in a way to awaken interest an' *hold attention*.

Everybody oughter read No. 1. It oughter be in every home in our land.

Leaves, grasses, specimens of bark, woods, seeds, rock, etc., was brought into school an' studied. Language, spellin', composition, memory, imagination, observation, number, color, drawin', readin', writin', was all taught from these—sometimes everything from just one.

*And more.* When it come to Natural History I was glad to hear one teacher say:

\*“*Information Readers.*”—Boston School Supply Co., Boston, Mass.

"Julius, I wish you hadn't brought these birds' eggs."

"Why?"

"Because it seems cruel to rob the birds. We can examine the eggs in the nest without removing them—often without touching them."

"Birds can't count!"

"Do you *know* that?"

"It isn't any worse than to shoot the birds."

"That's begging the question. Two Wrongs don't make one Right. But *I* wouldn't shoot them either, except for food."

"Lots of ladies wear 'em on their hats."

"I know it, Julius; but often that is done from thoughtlessness rather than from any disposition to be cruel. Let me read you what Cowper thought about kindness"—and she read the good old poem beginning

"I would not enter on my list of friends—"

then took up the gauntlet again:

"I saw one of our little girls chasing butterflies yesterday with a long net. I'd hate to have some one break her arm as uselessly as she sometimes broke the butterflies' wings."

"Wouldn't you kill snakes?"

"Well, if I had the courage, and was going to

be bitten by one, I might do it in self-defense; but not merely because I saw and disliked it. But now I want to hear some stories about what you've seen some one do that was kind."

The hands flew up, eyes shone, an' all was eager to be first to tell about this.

One had "seen a man get out and walk up hill 'cause his horse was tired."

Another one knew a "little girl that brought a little chicken in the house every night to stay in cold weather, 'till it got enough feathers to keep it warm."

One saw a woman "warm the milk to feed a little calf with, 'cause it didn't like cold victuals!"

Several had seen men who was fishin' (evidently for food) throw some back in water "instead of leavin' 'em on the shore to die when they wasn't the kind they wanted."

Right there that teacher give them boys 'n' girls a good lesson on "fishin' for fun," shootin' birds 'n' such like. An' as for birds to wear on hats 'n' head-dresses! Well, I don't believe none o' them girls 'll ever do it!!

Then she asked 'em to study on this line, 'n' to do *their best* to practice kindness in all its forms, to animals, to each other, to their parents, friends 'n' strangers; especially to the poor, the sick, the

aged an' the ignorant. Even the wicked were to claim a share of their charity.

"Remember," says she, "they may be living the very best they know how to. They may not have been as well taught as you. Shun their sin, but be careful not to lose an opportunity to do a kind deed—even among wicked men and women."

Mister Editor—there's law and gospel too in such teaching. "Hate the sin but love the sinner!" Can our Sunday-go-to-meetin' creeds furnish anything better for man or beast? Will the children who are brought up in this way be hard-hearted, murderers of those whose power or place makes them victims of envy, jealousy an' covetousness?

Can we afford *not* to have kindness, patience and charity taught in our schools? Ain't we buildin' with good material when we put in respect, courtesy, justice, an' like qualities that can't be bought to the grocery? Ain't our schools furnishin' some pretty good "stock" for the next generation?

So thinks,

POLLY POOLE.

[So does

THE EDITOR.]



## CHAPTER XII.

## EDUCATIONAL CHANGES.

*People and Things Studied More and Books Less  
Than Fifty Years Ago.*

October 3, 1893.

MY DEAR EDITOR:

It is certainly surprisin' that such changes in the work can have been goin' on so long an' I never heerd of it until about a year ago! Well, well, "The world *does* move!"

*Books* was what we studied when I went to school in the little red school house in the Genesee valley. My land, how well I remember the little square windows, four on each side of the room, with their tiny panes o' glass; the master's desk at the fur end o' the room; the big stove near the entry (stoves was just comin' to be used then); the benches runnin' close to the wall on each side, where the "big" girls an' boys set; the clumsy desks in front, an' the front row, two

or three steps lower down for the little tads, "the alphabet class" the teacher called 'em—"trundle-bed truck" was all they got from some o' the big boys; the big girls was a shade better, 'n' called 'em "young ones"; but they all lived through it, 'n' through some pretty hard discipline, too; an' *study!* Why land o' man!!

Lem me tell you somethin.' We had a small blackboard space—but it was crackled, 'n' was right behind the teacher's chair. No wall maps nor globes.

"Whips?"

Well, yes; 'n' they wasn't most generally idle, neither. Every thin' was useful in them days, 'n' I don't know 's Sam Hill ever would 'a' got his alphabet if it hadn't been lashed into 'im at the last; he'd been to school most all winter, 'n' somehow he'd skipped notice until all to once the master says, says he:

"Sam, come here 'n' say your alphabet!"

Sam come, but he couldn't say more'n two or three, mebbly half a dozen, letters—but he begun all right, "A is for Ape," 'n' the master kep' a p'intin' with his penknife to what he wanted next. But he didn't go straight—'n' when he come to "I is for Ibex" Sam said: "I don't know."

Says the master: "That's I."

"U," says Sam.

"No, *I*" says the master agin, impatient like.

"U," says Sam.

The master begun to git warm in the face altho' it was February out o' doors, 'n' says he:

"Don't say *U*; say *I*."

"*Him*," says Sam, p'intin' at Mr. Woodard, 'n' some o' the big boys jest roared, 'n' the big girls giggled.

(Why, yes, "girls used to giggle in them days" pretty much as they do now—"specially if the *boys* was tickled. Human nature don't change much if teachin' does!)

This kind o' riled the master, 'n' Sam blubbered when Mr. Woodard threatened to lash him if he didn't say it proper, 'n' he laid some several pounds o' stress on the "*I* is for Ibex" whereat poor Sam blurted out: "The *master* is for Ibex!"

Well, he got a thrashin' for his stupidity, 'n' was sent to his seat; but bime by he got called out agin 'n' somehow he seemed to sense it this time, for he got along all right—'n' I never was sure jest how fur that lickin' was to be credited with clearin' up his mental opaqueness! (I've copyrighted that phrase for you.)

I b'lieve they don't teach the alphabet in no such way now. Why, I've just been readin' a

book\* by *Miss Ellen E. Kenyon*, of New York City, where even our windows would 'a' been used by the teacher for lessons in Observation, Number, Form, Language, 'n' I don't know what all! Here's some sentences from it that'll give you an idea of what I mean:

"How many windows have we? Our room and the next have how many together? How many sashes has each window? How many have all three? How many panes of glass has a whole window? What is one half of that number? \* \* \* I am thinking of something else. But for what I am thinking of we could not see the clock, because there would be no light in the room. It is made of wood and something else that I can see through. It has two parts that slide up and down. These two parts hang by cords. It is a good thing that we can slide them up and down because by that means we can get all the fresh air we need. The whole thing is oblong in shape and contains twelve smaller oblongs. \* \* \* Can you see the glass? Do you see the glass itself or only the spots on it? How then do you know that the glass is there?

\* *The Coming School*, pages 47-50. Publishing Company, 37 West 10th St., New York.)

"Henry may tap on the glass with his slate pencil. With his lead pencil. With his finger nails. With the fleshy part of his fingers. Again with each. Which makes the sharpest sound? The softest? Does a blind person know when anyone is opening a window? How? Is the sound different from that of opening a door?

"How does glass feel to the touch? Hard or soft? Cold or warm? Rough or smooth? Did you ever cut your finger with glass?

"If you had a piece of glass and a piece of wood in your hand which would you be most careful not to drop? Why?"

Mister Editor, I calmly advise everybody to read that book. It's only 50 cents, an' is chock full o' big words 'n' big ideas—'n' will just make anybody *think o' what they're teachin' 'n' how*. There ain't no nonsense in it (unless it is the big talk about "concepts" 'n' sich, which is kinder out o' my line); but there's dead loads o' good reasonable work between them covers; 'n' any teacher what 'll foller them ways won't need to go huntin' for a job—as they used to in my day 'n' generation.

An' that reminds me that them as is so much attached to old ways an' means, oughter try comparisons once in a while. *I dont believe* things

was so superior when spellin' was all done by word o' mouth—though it's just within reason that our spellin' now could be improved. But, so can other things! Cookery don't seem to be what it used to, when your mother made mince pies out o' meat she bought at the butcher's by the pound, instead o' ready-made at the grocer's in a little paper box—does it now? An' how about tailorin'? Hain't you heerd your father tell about that "best coat" that was every stitch made by hand an' lasted nigh onto twenty year afore he thought it necessary to replace it? Can he say the same o' the one he used after that? How about furniture? See inn'y difference between the woven wire springs 'n, hair mattresses 'n blankets o' the present, 'n' the old-fashioned, high-post bedsteads, that almost required a step-ladder to get into, with the deep layers o' feather beds that let you go down, almost out o' sight below, with woolen sheets 'n' blue 'n' white home-spun counterpanes 'n' pieced quilts above?

Go thro' your house, office, barn, farm, mill, 'n' see the improvements (changes may be a better word—I'm still inclined to balk on some of 'em) 'n' tell me if it 'd be reasonable to s'pose that teachin', in all its ways, had stood still!

I guess not—but even if I don't quite believe

in all the new-fangled things 'n' methods, *I* don't want to back-number my books. Give 'em to me fresh, 'n' I'll try to pick out the good 'n' skip t'other parts!

Now I kind o' like the idea of studyin' *real things more* 'n' books less than was done when I was to school. It kind o' seems to me 's though it wa'n't goin' to take so long to get the hang o' things.

Mercy me, but children seven year old to-day write better 'n I done at twelve. I never could see no sense o' learnin' a lot o' pot-hooks for writin', nohow; 'n' I find that now they don't begin in no such way, 'n' I'm glad of it.

With so many children leavin' school at fourteen, fifteen, 'n' sixteen years old, its a mercy they get a chance to know before then that there's somethin' on earth besides work 'n' money.\*

Not that I despise either—by no manner o' means! But I've noticed that what boys 'n' girls get interested in in childhood 'n' youth *stays by*; 'n' while grammar 'n' figgers 'n' the spellin' book don't seem to have much drawin' power for some of 'em, stones, trees, squirrels, 'n' their own physical machinery does wake 'em up.

So I'm free to confess that the modern ways o'

\*See Appendix B.

layin' out school work is miles ahead o' them I wrastled with. Yes, I know I called 'em "new-fangled" in the beginnin'; 'n' they be—but my inflections on that word is different from what it was in eighteen-hundred-an'-ninety-two. I begin to like the word—for it means a good many things that I couldn't have thought out all by myself, 'n' I'm glad my poor old eyes have heerd 'n' my ears seen what they have heerd 'n' seen since I first writ about these things to you.

Now I'm goin' out to the Buckeye State to see what Superintendent Draper 's about up in Cleveland. The teachers here seem to think he done a heap o' good while bossin' the schools here in York State—'n' I do hope he ain't no more afraid o' them political machines there than he was here.

I'll be sure to tell you what I see that's out o' kilter—'n' you can print it. Much obliged for favors shown to

Yours to command,

POLLY POOLE.

[Yes, the study of people and things in connection with books is better than books alone. Kindergarten work is demonstrating this in some corners of the earth where teaching had grown



more or less machine-like—*but*, even kindergarten work may become spiritless. Let no one stop the wheels of progress with blocks of prejudice!

EDITOR.]

## CHAPTER XIII.

## SALARY AND WORK.

*Miss Poole Finds Teachers Well Paid in the Buckeye State, and Work Proportionately in Advance.*

Dayton, Ohio, Nov. 1, 1893.

MY DEAR SIR!

"There is nothing new under the sun!" The "New Education" ain't so *new* as I thought, 'n' there 's lots of people at work at it out here who have been in it since ever so long ago, even before the Quincy Schools or Methods was heard of outside of the Old Bay State!

I wish you could have gone with me into some o' the schools where I've been since I left York State. Why, I've found *Superintendents who superintend* an' who know every school 'n' every teacher—'n' I was goin' to say every child, 'n' I don't know as I'd be fur off the track if I did, for "Colonel" White (of Dayton) who went

with me out to the Wyoming School in this city does know nearly that; 'n' both he 'n' Mr. Superintendent Shawan (of Columbus) not only know what's been taught in the classes—but *just how to do it themselves*.

What's more, they don't b'lieve in puttin' their teachers in Examination straight jackets, neither; nor in makin' *machines* of her (the sex predominates—even as principals!) for once they find teachers able for the situation they let 'em more or less alone, to be judged by their work.

An' another thing they don't discriminate agin a woman because she happened to be a rib instead o' clay! Most all the principals is women—'n' if you think they hain't got no executive ability come with me into the school out on Mound Street in Columbus 'n' watch them several hundred children come down stairs 'n' go out to play or go home; 'n' just so of the school out on Second Avenue where there's another big crowd o' children to be took care of; 'n' *both done by women* with ever so many assistant teachers; 'n' nobody says 'tain't just 's well done 's them that has men to supervise 'em! I've seen some *men* that done very well in these places, too—but I ain't goin' to call no names, for they might feel sort o' sot up—but over on Fifth Avenue I did

see a man that knew how to tend to school in good shape. I seen some more, too, but I only started to say that most o' the schools (includin' the Normals) in these two cities is run by women an' in first-class style.

An' I oughter mention the kindness an' politeness I met from 'em all, *an' none of 'em knowed I was makin' history of 'em!*

Why! Land o' Liberty! I'd just *like* to go to school agin 'f I could go to jus' such a school 'n' jus' such a principal 's I seen out to Avondale in Columbus! An' 'f you'll b'lieve it, I didn't find none o' them schools overdone in work 'n' numbers. In our State it ain't nothin' uncommon to find fifty or even sixty (I've seen more) children turned out to one teacher, 'n' here forty 's above the average.

"Good work?" Well, I guess so—'n' the normal work 's helpin' things amazin'ly! *An' so 's the pay!* Why bless me they b'lieve in payin' for good stuff out here—I s'pose that's why the city of Cleveland got Mr. Draper away from us—'n' if a man is worth \$1500 for a principal he gets it; 'n' if a woman does the same work in the same satisfactory way she gets the same wages!

"Millenium near?"

I thought so. I was brung up in Western New

York, 'n' I'm proud of it—its one o' the prettiest sections o' Uncle Sam's farm—but my land! Ask any o' the women teachers in Rochester how much money they get for their work !! Then ask how *little* some o' them can get along on, 'n' live, 'n' not break most a dozen Commandments while doin' it, 'n' I guess you'll get an eye-opener!

Oh, I know there's two sides to it—'n' some o' the teachers may be awful incompetent, or indifferent, or somethin'—but I don't know 's it's accordin' to law 'n' gospel to make all the rest take the consequences of the short-comin's of a few. *Besides*—if they are so awfully low down in the scale *why are they there?* Is the work of so little importance that anybody 'n' everybody can be let run it? One might think so from the wages paid in some o' the schools.\* Let's try a little arithmetic on the subject—better yet let me recite from a letter I got from a woman last spring when I was busy scornin' some o' the teachers for the work they didn't do. I wish I could give the whole letter—but it ain't hardly fair to bring in none but the salary question just now. She says:

\*See Appendix C.

Rochester, N. Y. May 16, 1893.

MY DEAR MISS POOLE:

I think you're a little too bitter on the school question. You're an outsider and I don't believe that you've asked half enough questions. It's all right to detect failure and weakness and error—but it is quite another thing to correct the same. Suppose you begin looking for a remedy. Let me illustrate:

I came in from school Friday night—not quite so fresh as I started out on Monday morning, after having had fifty-two pupils in my care for five days, to say nothing of outside work in the way of looking over next day's work each night, examining slates, desks, "papers," etc., after school is dismissed, and doing the numerous little things that a teacher must if she would *keep up*, and "keep up" we *must* or drop out.

Well, I had a lovely invitation out to dinner, with a concert in prospect afterward—but was too tired *and cross* (I deny that I'm "nervous" the American woman's substitute for cross) to even think of going; but after dinner I donned my lounging dress and came to my room to see what my educational journals had to offer me in the way of advice, help and encouragement.

Opening one\* I came across your gentle (?) sarcasm on "Accuracy" and its neglect in our schools. I read it—as I had your previous articles—but determined at the first opportunity to call a halt and give you a pocket full of statistics.

Then I picked up the New York School Journal of May 6th and read, in an editorial:

"Take New York state, for example; there must be something lacking for in 1892 more than 100 of the 30,000 teachers in the state would have gathered, especially when there was the influence of the National Association to help. Think of the enthusiasm when the politicians of a state meet! There will have to be a compulsory law yet to get the teachers of a state together -- here at the East."

Well, it makes me tired, and takes away all my courage and ambition—for the employment of which qualities I am paid the magnificent sum of \$300 a year! I have no home or family and so cannot "sponge" a living from some of my relatives even if disposed to—but pay \$4 a week (and I *have to pay my board* during the entire year) = \$208. I do not have "laundry privileges" in my boarding house, and no time to use them if I had—so my washing costs me twenty-five cents a week—\$13 more. I have been brought up to at-

\*The one that contained Chap. V. of this book while running as a serial.

tend church—and being of Quaker origin that left me too independent to occupy a “sitting” that some one else paid for, so that costs me another ten. (How they do vanish!) I take some little interest in educational matters outside of my own department, for I really want to *do my best*, so I take the above mentioned journals, one at \$1.00 and the other at \$2.50. My heart is not entirely calloused yet, so ten cents a week for “sweet Charity” disposes of another V and twenty cents more. A dollar a week does not seem extravagant as a provision toward a wedding outfit *if* the Prince dawns on my vision, nor toward a comfortable old age if he doesn't. Count out \$50 more.

*Total \$291.70*

I do my own millinery, dressmaking and plain sewing during my vacation—but *can't* make my shoes! Society forbids me to appear *a la* Maud Muller—on the streets; in my own room I may do as I please, but—

*I have left \$8.30 for clothing, books, incidentals (medicines if needed, street-car fares, lecture, concert, anything—even to a postage stamp or chewing gum must be paid for!) etc.; and while I should be delighted to attend the Teacher's Association at Saratoga the puzzle with me is how to do it and pay expenses!*



As it would take about a week I *might* “bulldoze” my landlady into rebating \$3.00; that would help pay my passage *one way*, and if I go by canal I may be able to work out the rest—on the tow path! But how am I going *to live* during that week? My bonnets and dresses are “behind the times” it is true—but I’ll endure that *and go* for the sake of the “enthusiasm” if you and some of the others who are continually “suggesting” the presence of deficiencies will point out a few ways and means.

“Politicians” indeed! What would become of their fiery enthusiasm on my salary? Do they attend State Conventions *at their own expense*, or are their expenses paid by their constituents?

Now, my dear Miss Poole, mine is by no means an isolated case. Some teachers here get more than I do. (This is my second year.) *Some get less*. Some have families or individuals to support from their meager salaries. And if the salaries of the entire “30,000 teachers” of the state were averaged I think mine would be a little ahead!

Then, too, some of our teachers are going in for “higher education” and are indebted for advance loans, made while they were getting a start—and must pay this up before free to do any-

thing more toward "mental equipment"

*Don't you think* the work is commensurate to the pay, all things considered?

How would it do for you to use your voice and pen in agitation of *this side* of the work? Hoping to hear that you will, I remain,

Very Cordially Yours,

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Now Mister Editor that worried me 'n' I put on my bonnet 'n' took the train for Rochester to get at the "statistics" promised by that young woman an' I grieve to say they was true. She's goin' to get away soon. I've just called the attention of a man out West, who wants a teacher (in his home), to this one—'n' he thinks if a girl can do all that *on \$300 a year* she's a treasure, 'n' I didn't deny it!

But that ain't the *very worst!* In Western Massachusetts some counties employ teachers at *\$4.00 a week* who are college graduates! And then we cry down their work!! May the good Lord forgive us for all we 've writ 'n' said 'n' done that's discouraged one earnest teacher, or hurt the conscience of one who is truly workin' with an eye beyond pay day!!!

Let us all give thanks on the day set apart for national praise that the Buckeye teachers are

not sharpening their noses on poverty's grindstone—and that they can afford to do good work !

Yea and amen, from

P. POOLE.

[In an editorial entitled "Teachers' Salaries Again" the Rochester (N. Y.) UNION AND ADVERTISER of December 27, 1893, makes this statement, and pleads for justice to the "underpaid" teachers of that beautiful city :

"The conference of the finance committee of the Common Council with a special committee of the Board of Education yesterday calls attention again to the question of an increase of the salaries of the grade teachers in the public schools. It will be remembered that this question was up last spring ; the sentiment in favor of justice to the teachers was universal, the admission being made on every hand that they were underpaid. But as has happened before, an obstacle to the proposed increase was found in a charter provision. The victims of this obstacle were given to understand, however, that just as soon as legislation could be had \* \* \* they would have no reason to complain of the earnest desire of the Board of Education to do them justice.

"As the meeting of the legislature is near at hand, it appears to be proper to ask one or two questions. Is this understanding to be observed? Is the promised increase to be made? Certain indications hardly justify unqualified answers in the affirmative. The conference spoken of dis-

closes the existence of a number of unpaid bills aggregating many thousands of dollars. It discloses also more anxiety to get money to pay them than to increase the teachers' salaries. That all bills properly contracted should be paid, no one will deny; money should be raised in some way to meet them; but the matter should not be permitted to obscure or blot out the more important matters of justice to the teachers. Too many times already and upon pretexts not altogether beyond criticism have they been obliged to put their lips to the cup of disappointment. To oblige them to do so again upon another pretext scarcely less creditable than its long line of predecessors is to tax faith in human nature to a degree that cannot be borne with equanimity.

“ Without asking what right the Board of Education had to contract bills when there was no money to meet them, let the hope be expressed that so dubious a pretext will not be allowed to thwart an increase of salaries. That accomplishment of this object may be placed beyond question, it is of the highest importance that one thing be done. As Assemblyman O'Grady has already suggested, the proposed amendment of the charter should separate the teachers' fund from the contingent fund. As long as the money available for different purposes is lumped together, contingent expenditures will always trench upon expenditures for salaries. Every proposition to increase the one will be met with the demand to pay the other. It has been so in the past; there is not the least reason to believe that it will be so in the future. By adopting Assemblyman O'Grady's suggestion \* \* \* the salaries of teachers

\* \* \* can be increased. \* \* \* 'This would be an act of justice; it would be making labor worthy of its hire.'

As the amount of "increase" indicated is *only* from \$5 to \$15 per month, *proportioned to experience*, there seems nothing alarmingly extravagant in the proposition that seems so unlikely to be met with an "unqualified affirmative" !

[EDITOR.]

## CHAPTER XIV.

“TO SEE OURSELVES AS ITHERS SEE US.”

*Miss Poole Holds up the Mirror of the Public Press.*

December 2, 1893.

MY DEAR SIR:

Home again 'n' glad to be here; 'n' I've just a few words o' private conversation for the entire teaching force. Print 'em easy, please, like “apples of gold in pictures of silver”—'n' with velvet frames.

An' *first* is this: Be sure you're right—then go ahead, regardless of criticism. But—*be sure*; and be sure *you're right*; then “go”—don't stand still, or you'll stagnate. And go *ahead*. No back steps in this work, please.

*Second*: Take pride in your work. Having done your best, *speak well of the system* in general. Admit that there are errors (there are—and grave ones) but *insist that there is great progress*. If you are not proud of your profession who will be? *Make it* a thing of which all must be proud.

Seek the co-operation of parents, citizens, school-officials and THE PRESS.

*Finally:* "Look up and not down; Look out and not in; Look ahead and not back; *Lift up* and lend a hand!"

I append a few clippings saved from newspapers all over the land since these papers were begun. They show, in a measure, public sentiment on some points, and should give you fresh courage.

Speaking of the Teachers' Institute assembled at Greensburg, Pa., December 28, 1892, the TRIBUNE of that place extended a hearty greeting and cordial welcome to the teachers and said:

"Parents and directors in many places are no longer willing to have their children crowded into the narrow walls of the school room so densely as to impair their health for life, and to render profitable instruction next to impossible.

"They are looking to the necessity of placing school rooms within reach of all, and making it possible in the rural districts for all the children to get to school, and that, too, even in unfavorable weather.

"Other improvements in public sentiment and public activities also appear. The school term has been lengthened; wages are continually increasing; schoolhouses are improving, and a spirit of progress seems to pervade the people in the cause of education.

“What of the teachers? While it is true that there has never been a time when there were not grand teachers, Socrates, Plato, Pestalozzi, Froebel-Arnold, and we must not forget the many excellent teachers of our own county of past generations, yet it is a fact that never before was the standard of the teachers in Westmoreland so high as to-day. There are more teachers that are graduates of high schools, academies, seminaries, normal schools, and colleges, and also more bearing permanent certificates than ever before. This shows an increase in the general intelligence and in the standard of teachers which will go on until public sentiment will demand that all the schools be filled with teachers who are educated and trained for their work, just as the minister, lawyer or doctor is trained for his work.”

On the 30th the TIMES of Cochran, Pa., reports County Supt. Wright's address, saying :

“This gathering of the educational forces of this great county of Crawford is not in response to an arbitrary call from your County Superintendent, but is in obedience to the law of this Commonwealth.

“A higher motive, also, has operated to bring together this body of earnest men and women. Sordid motives may actuate some people in many of the acts of life, but not so with the under-paid and often over-worked teachers of our land. The springs of action lie deeper down in the hearts of most of these self-sacrificing people who labor for the elevation of the children entrusted to them.”



On the 29th the LEDGER of Tacoma, Wash., gave nearly two columns to reporting the sessions of the State Teachers' Association for the preceding day, and commenting on a paper read by Professor Charles W. Borst of Centralia "How Do Methods Cultivate Mind," said :

"He also built an ideal so seemingly high that, if reached, the schools would become a heaven on earth for the little ones, and they would be almost perfect in following the model of their preceptors."

The Boston TRANSCRIPT of January 14, '93, gives a detailed report in which we read these signs of progress and of the interest taken in the work :

"Children so like to consider themselves as original discoverers and fancy collectors in the fields of science that this department of school work is very popular, for in every single town in the State these nature studies are now pursued.

"The educational value of the institutes cannot be too highly estimated. No stronger impulse to constant progressive education, and no greater tribute to the harmony with which the secretary, the agent and the local authorities work together, has ever been furnished than by these meetings, to which Dr. Dickinson has devoted so much time, zeal and wisdom. \* \* \* Such meetings show the interest in public school education."

December 30, 1893, the TOPEKA DAILY CAPITAL (Kan.) says :

"Too much of this criticism comes from the superintendents and the professors who do not come in contact with the pupils. There is danger of criticising ourselves to death. \* \* \* It reminds one of a Methodist camp meeting to see the teachers gather in groups and talk after the sessions adjourn. They are a very sociable set of people."

On the 23d of the same month the DEMOCRAT, Lock Haven, Pa., said that :

"There were assembled here more directors than probably ever gathered at the same place before."

and of the address by the Honorable Henry Houck :

"The honorable gentleman said so much to elevate and inspire that it is with sorrow that we see him leave."

On the 19th the FORT WORTH GAZETTE (Tex.) reported the Institute in session there, and quoted Dr. Garrison of the Texas University as saying that :

"The schools of to-day are better than those of the past, because there is higher organization and more perfect co-operation."

The RADICAL, Beaver Falls, Pa., says on the 31st :

The Institute has been very pleasant and profitable. The instructors were excellent teachers, thoroughly con-

versant with their subjects and practical in their methods.  
\* \* \* Supt. Hillman has held another successful Institute. The last one seems to be the best, but only, we suppose, because it is nearest and freshest in memory. The institute is the great event of the holidays, and we hope a holiday week will never pass in Beaver without being made profitable and pleasurable by the holding of our County Institute."

The NEWS, Jersey City, N. J., Dec. 12, denounces the action of the Hoboken Board of Education in making an appointment in direct reversal of the results of an examination—using "political pull" instead of scholarship, and called the vote "disgraceful."

In his message, the Mayor of Brooklyn said (see Brooklyn CITIZEN, January 3, 1893):

"Many public needs can be postponed. We cannot, however, deal with the subject of education in that way. We cannot hold back the years of our children. Every year that they are denied the privileges of the school is a loss that cannot be recovered. A large item in the increase of current expenses of the year has been devoted to the educational department of our city. Of the \$10,108,381.80 raised by taxation in this city, \$1,996,500 are devoted to educational work, and yet the record shows that for the year now closing we have not fully met the needs of our city. During the year there have been constructed four new school houses, and large additions have been

made to four others, \* \* \* but, owing to the closing of unfit rooms, the net gain has amounted to only 4,453 seats, while there has been a net gain in registered scholars of 5,039. The greatest overcrowding has occurred in the Eighteenth, Twenty-Seventh and Twenty-Eighth Wards. Three new school houses, however, are being erected for the accommodation of those wards. The following buildings and additions are in course of erection and will be completed during the year 1893, viz.:"

giving a list of four buildings and five additions.

January 1, 1893, the SIOUX CITY JOURNAL, Iowa, notes the growth and improvement of the city's public schools, gives a cut of the new High School building which cost \$104,460, and devotes a large space to its description.

The PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER of January 11 discussed the annual report of the Board of Education, and said :

"Unrestricted immigration, loose naturalization laws and the abuse of the right of suffrage have assumed such proportions as cause many to entertain grave apprehensions lest good government should finally be subverted.

"Statistics are given to show that the result of all this is that the criminal class is growing at an unprecedented rate. Compulsory education, President Sheppard says, is the only remedy, and he suggests that the Legislature take such steps as to provide for it.

"Reference is made to the presentation of flags to the

schools by the Junior Order of American Mechanics, and to the wholesome effect resulting therefrom."

January 18th, the CHICAGO DISPATCH says :

"All thinkers have by this time arrived at the conclusion that education must be the most potent factor in solving the intricate and well nigh distracting problems that are agitating the people of not only this country but of the world."

TRUTH, Scranton, Pa., January 20, says :

"Notwithstanding the rapidity with which schools have been built in the past few years, in Scranton and elsewhere, every school room is thronged with eager learners, and the thirst for knowledge is so universal as to render compulsory attendance unnecessary, even if it were desirable."

and is sustained by next day's WILKES-BARRE TIMES, which adds :

"Self-denial in the respect of making sacrifices, so that the children of the lowly shall be sent to school, is a predominating virtue among parents who know the advantages of primary education, and inspired by an affectionate regard for their little ones, aim to clear their future of the obstructions that embarrassed their own lives, by sending them as long as possible to the public schools."

The WASHINGTON STAR of January 9 hopes that :

"Chicago will not strike a plane of culture where the dead languages and abstruse mathematics are ranked before manual training in importance."

The JOURNAL of Port Chester, N. Y., said (January 12) that "The last twenty-five years have seen a great change in public sentiment on the subject," drawing—but the editor need not have limited his remark to this study.

January 17 the CHICAGO NEWS allowed (?) Miss Burt nearly a column in which to state her own position regarding points in which the Board had not been correctly reported, and she cited instances of teachers who purchase material for their school work, because "It is their religion to do their work right."

On December 30, 1892 the CHRONICLE, Augusta, Ga., says that Governor Northen vetoed the bill enlarging the curriculum, and quotes him as follows:

"It is bad policy to license teachers who are known to be incompetent to give instruction in a large part of the studies authorized to be taught."

The Boston Board of Education is quoted as reporting (GLOBE, Jan. 24, '93):

"The numerous voluntary and associated efforts to discover what is most essential in both matter and method in teaching are auguries of vast moment for the future of education.

"There is an increased attendance upon the schools, keeping the ratio of attendance of children of school age fully up to the ratio of increase of population.

“There is also increased interest in the support of schools, indicated by the greater outlay of the past year, and especially in the noticeable improvement in school buildings, to which the towns are now giving more generous attention, incited thereto, it may be, by the liberal example of the State itself.”

THE POST, Houston, Texas, January 13, says:

“As the State grows, the public schools and higher education institutes expand to keep apace with her greatness. Their encouragement in all respects must spring from the honor and pride of the people whose liberality towards them in the past vouchsafes for them success in the future.”

Regarding promotions and examinations, the ROCHESTER (N. Y.) HERALD of December 12, '92, speaks of Supt. Draper's innovation at Cleveland as “Admirable.”

The REGISTER, Newburg, N. Y., December 24, endorses it and says “Examinations do more harm than good; the SYRACUSE (N. Y.) HERALD of the 26th says that a gradual reform in this direction has been going on there for some time; the FALL RIVER (Mass.) HERALD of Jan. 24 says that it is a weighty matter and will stand examination, as much can be said on both sides.

Of our public school system the OSWEGO TIMES said, Jan. 23:

"It is the greatest bulwark of the Nation. \* \* \* Attacks upon it are a very disagreeable form of treason to the government itself. \* \* \* it is our Nation's chiefest glory."

In his last annual report State Supt. Waller of Pennsylvania says salaries have been raised, the term lengthened and school buildings erected in every respect worthy the cause.

Supt. Swett of San Francisco is reported by the CALL of December 6, 1892, to have said that a new era of educational activity is being entered upon.

The NEW HAVEN NEWS has the following in its issue of January 11, '93 :

"If it be true, as has been said, that the introduction into the public schools of carpenter work, sewing, cooking, gymnastics, music and other things which in boarding schools are known as 'extras,' has not interfered with instruction in the more essential studies, and if it be also true, as also has been said, that the time devoted to such new branches amounts in some, if not all grades, to a day and a half of each week, what an improvement there must have been in the past few years in the methods of teaching."

The DULUTH HERALD, Minn. gives a column and a half to a reporter who talks of the public schools there, December 10, '93, saying :

"The continual aim is to make all the work practical."



After criticising the New York schools as depicted by a recent (but possibly superficial) critic, the TROY TIMES of January 7, '93, says:

“ But such a system is the inevitable result of subordinating the schools to the uses of ring politics, where the most ignorant and useless teacher is valued according to the strength of his ‘ pull.’ ”

In Jersey City the principals of the public schools (men) asked and were refused an increase of salaries, one of the directors characterizing the request as a raid on the city treasury which he should resist and oppose—and the principals challenged his language, protesting against the “ coarse, undeserved and uncalled for insults.” (See JOURNAL, Jan. 12, '93.)

The CHICAGO POST of Dec. 30, '92, calls for more salary for the primary teachers and less for the specialists.

The PIONEER PRESS of St. Paul, Jan. 8, '93, points out *one cause* of the apparent failure of the system to come up to the high ideal “ that would make us the envy of the world ” in the following language :

“ Exactly what is done in the schools the people do not know. The average citizen, even when a parent, with children of school age, never goes inside of the building when they are being fitted for the work of life. He knows

only by conjecture or hearsay of the system which he is helping to support, and which is determining the future of his children."

*Parental indifference must not be laid at the teachers' door!*

The editor manfully points out another and worse occasion of inferior work as follows :

"The schools are of high grade and improving exactly in proportion to their freedom from the control of ordinary political influences. Where political considerations prevail, they reach their lowest and worst estate. The political school board means that all educational interests are in the hands of men who have sought their places for what there may be in it. The first necessity with such men is to use their place and influence for personal advantage. They serve notice on the superintendent that places must be provided in the teaching force for their friends, and for the friends of those who worked for their elevation. The whole school system becomes, in a short time, a part of the vast political machine that degrades and contaminates whatever it touches. It is but a little while before fitness becomes of no consideration, and the corps of teachers is composed of either more or less active political agents, or the friends and dependents of politicians, who have no more adaptation for teaching than a ward heeler, and who discharge their duties as best they know how, by teaching the child to repeat what has been learned by rote. Nowhere does the municipal problem come home as sharply and seriously to the citizen as in its relation to the school sys-

tem. Nowhere else is the influence of party politics and local party combinations as fatal as when the control of the schools is aimed at. It is this which is wasting every year hundreds of millions of the people's money and blighting millions of young lives, while the people blindly trust in the fetish of their adored public school system ; either forgetful or ignorant of what it may become when entrusted to unworthy hands."

Honor bright, it looks to me as though the reformation should begin with the political "machine"! How would it do to wash that first, then winnow the teaching force—if necessary?

In the Mail Box column of the BOSTON TRAVELLER, Jan. 12, '93, we find the following :

"One who looks into the early history will soon discover that the chronic situation for the teacher has been much work and little pay."

In the December 12, '92, issue of the TOLEDO BEE, we read :

"In the comprehensiveness of thorough organization and in efficiency in execution it would seem that our system of public education is a grand success. \* \* \*

"We realize the progress which our schools have made and which they cannot help but make. The progress is permanent, and it is a matter in which vast humanity is interested."

"The methods of teaching various subjects, as presented

by the professors present, were certainly a liberal comprehension in the right direction, showing that freedom of thought in dealing with Nature's laws was fast taking the place of the strict confinement to text books, thus bringing the pupil in contact with thought which he will be able to realize by and through observation.

“One of our popular young teachers, Miss Jessica Marshall, has kindly contributed the following thoughts on ‘School from a Teacher’s Standpoint’ :

“At this time when so much has been written of cruelty in our schools, and even the Humane Society has found it necessary to pass resolutions about it, it is with real pleasure that I picture facts as they are.

“In the schools, one of the first things that would attract attention is the universal neatness. The pains which even the smallest boy takes in his appearance are equal to that of a Summit Street dude. His hair is brushed, his hands and nails are carefully cleaned and his shoes are black and shining. His mother will tell you that ‘George’ is not the same boy since he started to school. Why? Because his attention has been called to these things persistently, though kindly, by his teacher. Another thing that would be noticed is the variety of methods with which the teacher presents the same old truths, and the frequent changes in program which prevent the school days becoming monotonous and uninteresting. Do you suppose this is an accident, or the result of much time spent in thought?

“Courtesy, too, seems to be the law of the schools, both from the pupils to teachers and from the teachers to

pupils. The pleasant 'good morning' when they enter the school room, the quick apology for any little mishap, and the almost invariable use of requests instead of commands.

"Teachers are commonly represented as tyrants. Yet witness the affection displayed towards these same 'tyrants.' Children will willingly remain after school to do black-board work, collect slates, and carry pails of water, till it often becomes a difficult task for the teachers to decline their offers of service without hurting their feelings."

(Toledo doesn't seem "bad to take"—into consideration of the work!)

In the NASHUA (N. H.) GAZETTE of December 10, '92, we find some one looking backward to the schools of the last generation, and contrasting them with the schools of to-day. He says in conclusion :

"Things have changed in school matters and happily for the better. Of course they are not perfect but the way to improve them is for every parent to feel a personal interest in the schools of our city. This feeling that interest is taken in their work is as beneficial to teachers and school authorities as is the applause of an audience to the actor or critic's praise to an artist. Personal interest would soon open the eyes of those who should be interested in such matters to the defects as well as the merits of our schools. The parents might see defects that the superintendent or school board would be unable to discover as in

some respects they are brought into closer relations to the pupil than either board or superintendent."

The TIMES, Chester, Pa., same date, quotes the President of the South Chester School Board as saying :

"When I look back twenty years and see the rapid progress made in educational matters and the rapid increase in the value of school property it makes me feel old."

The St. Louis STAR SAYINGS of December 9, '92, says :

"The reiterated charge against the public school system, brought by its most uncompromising enemies, that they are Godless schools is infamous. It is intended to bring the system into discredit and pave the way for instructions in sectarian religion which, if accomplished, means the system's destruction.

"The agitation against our public schools at present is widespread, concerted and sinister.

"As by a general order, a grand assault is being made upon them.

"But their friends are alert and they bide their time.

"The forbearance of the American people, when a cherished institution is threatened, is well known.

"To presume upon their patience is to invite wrath, which, when it comes, will make short work of the allied influences now tending to undermine nearly all that the intellectual life of the nations stands for to-day."

January 11 '93, the Baltimore HERALD has this.

to say under the title "Wearing work of a teacher"

"Close observation shows that teaching is one of the most wearing occupations for women. Even the hard-working clerk, typewriter, journalist or seamstress, with longer hours and more drudgeline employment, keeps her health and strength better through five years of continuous service than does the average school teacher. The girl who begins with erect carriage and rosy cheeks will be seen in the course of a few years to have lost both.

"Much of this is attributed to the nervous strain necessary for the regular routine of governing often an unruly class and at the same time teaching the required studies. But allowing that teaching is hard work, without entering into the reasons, certainly nothing should be neglected which adds physical comfort to these positions of honor, filled many times by earnest women who strive by enthusiasm in their work and by a noble example to make teaching a profession.

"It would seem to be absurd to declare it is their right to occupy only rooms which can be properly heated and ventilated, and yet it is not too strong a statement to say that, to the writer's knowledge, one girl last winter owed a severe attack of pneumonia to the low temperature of her room, while others suffered more or less from the same cause. Because there are conditions over which the teachers themselves have little or no control, they should be all the more carefully attended to by those who do.

"There is another consideration, however, for which

they themselves are responsible, and that is the midday luncheon, which is very apt to be a basket affair, eaten as rapidly as possible in order to go on with the school work, or, as one teacher said, ‘she took a bite while correcting papers which had to be ready for the afternoon session.’ The full hour’s rest at noon should be enjoyed; when possible a breath of fresh air and a few minutes’ walk will make the duties of the afternoon easier.”

In summing up from these brief abstracts we may conclude :

1. All teaching is not on the down grade. Progress has been made.

2. Where not “up to grade” the machine work is not *all* chargeable to the teachers and superintendents.

3. Where so chargeable parents and taxpayers *must do their duty*—regardless of politics.

4. “The laborer is worthy of his hire”—and if good work is demanded good pay should be offered.

“Hoping that these few lines may find you enjoying the same blessing” I remain (as yet)

POLLY POOLE.

[Miss Polly has done a grand thing for us in giving us this birds-eye view of the cause. Let the good work of investigation and defense go on. Let the newspapers and magazines continue the timely discussion—and let every teacher in the



land who has a "view" to present, and every parent who has fault to find, with the "system," negatively or positively, or words of commendation for it, address the EDITOR of SNAP SHOTS, 37 West 10th St. New York. We propose to open our columns for just this purpose.

EDITOR.]

## APPENDIX A.

### “ONE MORE UNFORTUNATE.”

*Teachers' Companion, New York.*

SOMEWHERE, N. Y., Sometime, 1882.

MR. EDITOR :

The despairing wail of your “ Unfortunate Young Man ” bade defiance to distance, and after making an impression on the tympanum of my sensitive ears, found a ready and sympathetic echo in the auricles and ventricles of my usually callous heart, for I, too, am an innocent and impecunious victim of our Public School System. Just fancy a Balance Sheet made of the following debits and credits for and against this highly praised educational method!

## PUBLIC SCHOOL.

DR.

CR.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To 12 years of my life. Some of the best years, too.</li> <li>2. To a great proportion of childhood's hours that should have been devoted to physical culture and bodily development.</li> <li>3. To <i>some</i> of my morals and manners.</li> <li>4. To constant servitude in a room where there was little or no provision made for ventilation, proper light, sufficient heat or other physical necessities.</li> <li>5. To a woful lack of any practical knowledge of household duties, or the responsibilities of life.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. By a smattering knowledge of set rules in some particular branches.</li> <li>2. By a dwarfed growth, weak eyes, round shoulders, bent spine and contracted lungs.</li> <li>3. By association with several hundred other children of all grades so far as home influence and home training is concerned, and teachers that never made any effort to check plainly visible evils.</li> <li>4. By foul air to breathe, a diseased system and the <i>cheapest</i> talent that could be procured to "teach the young idea how to shoot."</li> <li>5. By a "SHEEPSKIN."</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

Is it strange that I'm not satisfied to be pronounced "a graduate" and yet to know that I have not learned anything of housework, or serving, because all my spare moments had to be spent in looking up dates, definitions, and formulas, or in writing five pages on "The Pleasures and Offices of Memory" or some equally lucid and interesting theme, instead of leaving me any margin of time to make practical experiments in the kitchen, the sewing room, the market or any of the numberless places likely to be within the orbit of my duties?

To be sure it gave me a cursory glance at the heavens, but

they were snatched from my enchanted gaze before I could locate a single constellation. It gave me "14 weeks in chemistry," but just as I began to be interested in the homely chemistry of bread-making, and the processes of fermentation in common things, that which "might have been" made useful in after life was crowded out for drawing!

And so through the entire curriculum. The "3 Rs." gave way for French—and I hated it heartily in consequence! Spelling and all common things were crowded out about half way up the "Hill of Science," and at 18 I find myself poorly developed both physically and mentally; with nothing useful to help myself with in the way of a trade or profession; too weak for manual labor, and unskilled for any other; and so I MUST TEACH. To be sure the pay is meager, but *so is the intellect that can afford to work for it.*

Meanwhile I must wait for a position, for the market is already glutted with such as I,—or (vain hope!) I can *marry* and so bring my woes to a period. And I guess I will—for Henry says I know as much as he does any way, and we can both learn, even if we do have to begin on the very lowest round of the ladder. And by the way, I am indebted to the P. S. S. for Henry, so I guess *that one credit will outbalance all the debits*, and the Balance Sheet balances the other way now.

So I'll wipe my weeping eyes, Mr. Editor, and bid you a more cheerful good bye than I expected to when I began this letter from

A SWEET GIRL GRADUATE.

P. S. Of course this could not go without the traditional postscript. I could not think of anything myself, but my father says "A liberal education isn't much better, as far as utility is concerned." I think he means something about like what one of my older brothers said the other day. Both of them are college graduates, and have been in business ten years (one is a lawyer ; the other is teller in a bank), and now they both say that at least *half* of that time has been spent in *unlearning* what they had learned, and in trying to reduce the other half to practical ideas that can be utilized in their business.

S. G. G.

## APPENDIX B.

We clip the following from the *New York Times* of January 7, 1894:

### OUR GREATEST EDUCATIONAL NEED.

An eminent authority estimates the money loss to the people of this country, in one way and another during the past year, due to ignorance of the elementary principles underlying public policy in matters of currency and taxation, at not less than \$1,000,000,000. Incidental to this loss are much hardship and suffering, and the estimate takes no account of what is yet to be undergone before a normal condition of things is re-established.

It is a commonplace remark that the safety of our institutions and the beneficence of our Government depend upon the intelligence of the people and a general diffusion of at least an elementary degree of education. It is of the last importance that the great body of citizens upon whose suffrages the policy and methods of public administration finally depend should be sufficiently enlightened to understand the questions at issue and to vote intelligently with reference to their settlement. It is for this that common schools, supported at public expense, are supposed to fit them, and yet these schools fail to teach the very things

which they most need to know. As a rule, boys leave the public schools with absolutely no knowledge of the principles that underlie questions of currency and taxation and of the application of those principles, and with only slight knowledge, if any, of the political history of the country; and it is surprising how few men who have had the advantages of a "higher education" have a clear understanding of the issues which are to be determined by political action.

\* \* \* \*

This great drawback, which costs us so much, is due to a lack of the right kind of education at the time when education is readily acquired and produces a lasting effect. It is a common notion, which comes from neglect in this very matter, that what is called political economy is a dry and difficult subject \* \* \* but its fundamental principles are easily understood and its elementary doctrines are within the comprehension of ordinary intelligence.

It would be absurd to attempt to teach boys and girls in grammar schools political economy in the ordinary sense of the term and in the ordinary way. But they can be made to understand what money is and what it is for. They can be taught what trade is and how exchanges are effected. A clear idea can be given them of what constitutes value and what determines prices. They can be made to understand the uses of credit and the devices by which it is made safely to serve the processes of industry and commerce. They will have no difficulty in comprehending what taxation is for and what effect it has. And so they can be led on from point to point until they reach a very fair

understanding of questions which lie at the bottom of public policy in matters that most nearly affect the interests of the people in their daily life, and which they must understand in order to exercise the rights of citizenship with any degree of wisdom.

What we most need in our system of popular education to-day is an elementary textbook dealing with the primary and settled principles of economy in a simple and attractive way, and the universal use of such a book in the common schools. \* \* \* It is a mistake to assume that the fundamental principles relating to the subject are in dispute or are matters of opinion. They are as well settled as those of physics or chemistry. It is only in their application that there are differences of opinion among those who really understand them. What we need first of all and most of all is to have them understood by men who vote, and especially by men who hold office. Then we shall not have political movements based upon ignorance and delusion, and "statesmen" whose arguments are as grotesque as those of the negro preacher who demonstrates that "the sun do move."



## APPENDIX C.

The following was taken from the *New York Evening Post*, December 6, 1893.

### PAY OF COUNTRY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

The inadequate payment of women who teach in the rural districts of Western Massachusetts was severely animadverted upon by Superintendent Walter P. Beckwith of Adams recently in an address before the Massachusetts Teachers' Association at Boston. It seems that in some of the Berkshire hill towns the wages of these women are less than \$20 a month, and in one town they are as low as \$15.75. Mr. Beckwith declared that such a state of things was a shame to "the great and wealthy Commonwealth of Massachusetts." "Of course," he said, "the young women who are going through some of the motions of teaching for such paltry remuneration are not well prepared to do the work set for them. A teacher who receives \$4 per week has no right to be well prepared."

What makes the giving of such mean compensation apparently inexcusable is that the rate of taxation in these towns is unusually high. In that paying the lowest salary of all it is \$28 a thousand. Mr. Beckwith brought out some other inter-

esting facts. He found that many of the women teaching in the four western counties of Massachusetts were college graduates nowadays and that the average increase in the wages of the men in the State at large since 1875 had been 58 per cent., in the wages of the women only 32. "These figures seem to show us," he said, "that in proportion as the elements of professionalism and permanence are introduced the wages increase. The wages of men teachers increase faster than those of women, for one reason, because men, as a rule, now remain longer in the work than women—it being less common than formerly for men, at least in Massachusetts, to teach as a mere makeshift."







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